

**VINCENT WALLACE.**

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**VOL. II**

# Musical Monthly

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1865.

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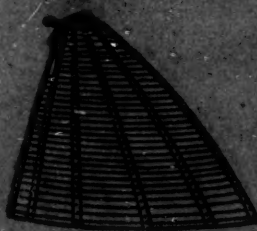
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Puts on his cravat of light green.  
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The Bulbuls of Bayswater trill,  
There are chestnuts a-blooming in Tavistock-square,  
And daisies on Haverstock-hill.

So swift is the spring, and the budding so brief,  
Of the trees, freed from winter's chill realm,  
You almost could swear the Royal Oak was in leaf,  
And umbrageous declare the Queen's Elm.  
Yet think not Westbournia and Brompton alone  
With vernal festivity ring :  
In Air-street the atmosphere's full of ozone,  
Spring-gardens are richer for spring.

In Lincoln's Inn-fields an agrarian sound  
Is borne—in the title I mean ;  
And there's rhythmic rurality now to be found  
In the mention of Paddington-green ;  
In Mayfair the noble how fair is the May,  
That wars 'gainst bronchitis and rheum :  
And Bloomsbury, too, hath a voice which alway  
Discourseth of berries and bloom.

And even the City—though there is a Bank  
Whereon the wild thyme never blows—  
Looks less uninviting, less dreary and dank  
Than when clothed in its fogs and its snows.  
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The City men well might despise,  
Unless—as in gardens he makes the stocks grow—  
He here could induce them to rise.

The sun's in the City ; and I, too, am there ;  
My stars for that same I don't thank :  
I'm sick of Old Broad-street and Finsbury-square,  
I'm sick of Cornhill and the Bank ;  
I'm sick of Board meetings, with Lords in the chair,  
Our chairman's as stiff as a plank.  
Business ! bah ! I'd as lief be in jail, I declare,  
I'd as lief take a turn at the crank !

When will the ripening season advance,  
And release a too sensitive mind,  
And bear me to Scarborough, Brighton, or France ?  
For commerce I ne'er was designed.  
The world has mistaken me—world is a fool !  
To lie all the day in the shade,  
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subject of your praise, is the acknowledged thief of your jewels. He confesses it, and says, moreover, that he had no accomplices."

Saved, saved, saved! She had been on the point of destruction, she thought, but now was rescued whilst another went down. What dreadful consciousness of weakness was hers, setting silent, whilst on her were bent a single pitying glance from George, and a basilisk stroke from the merciless Mainwaring.

"Under these circumstances nothing remains for me but to give the necessary information to the authorities and get him committed for trial. A more painful business than this it has never been my lot to encounter before."

There were slight intervals of silence now and again. George stood motionless, praying in agony that she might throw herself on her husband's mercy, and save herself and him. Had Mainwaring not been present who knows but that she would? But in life a constraint, proceeding occasionally from the most vulgar of sources, is frequently laid by fate upon the good impulses of the wayward heart; many a time a penitent wretch would throw himself weeping before kindly friends, and beg a sympathy that would not be refused to his remorse,—but a trifle, something commonplace and accidental, occurs to mar for ever the happiness of that soul. So with Mrs. Venning, the precious intervals ticked on, and still her intricate secret bound her silent to her chair.

Mr. Venning rose from his chair, saying, as he laid his hand on the door leading to the office, "I must, therefore, however pained I feel, send for the officers of justice."

"Stay!" cried Mrs. Venning, springing from her lethargic rest, and grasping his hand, "Not yet, Noel. For my sake, dear Noel, be merciful and forgive this man. He is young and brave, and full of good yet to come. Oh! for these paltry baubles don't kill his hopes and rob the world of its due. You tell me there's a mystery—oh! give him any doubt there is. Grant me this favour, Noel, if I should never seek another?"

He hesitated, not knowing what to answer his beautiful wife, who had flung back her veil from a face white as the foam of the champing sea.

"Compounding a felony," muttered Mainwaring not to anybody in particular.

"I feel almost inclined to grant your request," said Venning at length, relaxing his grasp of the door handle, "but—"

"Oh! do not hesitate, you won't regret it. A time will surely come when you will be glad you were merciful."

A gleam of penitence was this, thought George, and for the first time that long morning a hope struck into his gloom.

"What do you think of this proposal, Mainwaring?" asked Venning, in his perplexity.

"You may do as you please," answered the attorney, whose end was now gained so far; "the whole affair is as yet comparatively private, and you need not prosecute unless you like. As for the prisoner, he'll find Ruddibourne too hot for him, I should fancy, once the story gets about, as it's sure to do in the course of time—and so, he will be drummed out of the place—punishment enough, I should think. You, of course, can't retain him in your mill. After all, I think it the best plan. It will save you the trouble of going into court with Mrs. Venning, and making an exposure of your household affairs."

"Yes, yes, Noel—you hear what Mr. Mainwaring says." (She never quoted him before, and never will again). "Oh! do tell poor Heath that he is free to go. You will, won't you, dear husband?"

"Be it so, Clara. Heath, you have heard, and now you are free. To my wife you owe your liberty."

What a bitter mockery, and every one there felt it but the mill-owner himself.

"You cannot remain longer in my mill—and, I fear, not any longer in Ruddibourne. But before you go, I would earnestly beseech of you to clear up this mystery a little. You have nothing to fear. Who are your accomplices?"

"I have told you, Mr. Venning, that I have none." George spoke with his voice a little more impassioned than before Mrs. Venning's appearance. "I repeat that assertion. It is true. There is no one to blame but me. I pawned the jewellery, and I paid away the money, though no advantage did I reap. I have nothing more to say. My path lies away from Ruddibourne, where once I had thought to do some good in my life. I go away from home and friends, nameless

and characterless—but in that day when rewards and punishments shall be pronounced—when the murderer shall be marked on the brow, and the unforgiving shall be repulsed—then shall my innocence appear, which you cannot see now."

He turned away with a respectful gesture, and opening the door, passed out.

"A long time to wait for an *alibi*—till the day of Judgment as I suppose the fellow means. How deep the prisoner is with his apostrophes and long words." Thus far Mainwaring, idly watching the throes of that poor lady's spirit.

"I am not sure that I have acted right in letting him go," pondered the mill-owner, as he paced his little room, "but it was your fault, Clara, if anybody's."

"It was indeed my fault," she answered, in a low voice. Mainwaring understood the confession, though it was not made to him.

Mrs. King Smith was preparing the evening sacrifice of bacon and tea, and other good things for her husband when he came home grimy and tired from the foundry. Several small Smiths were sprawling comfortably on the bit of carpet distended in front of the blazing fire, playing with the cat who was so sleepy in the noontide heat of the room that it idly repelled the attacks of the youngsters with one eye open and the other closed in drowsiness. Mrs. Smith was bustling about in her tidy home, ever and anon devoting a correctional minute to her children, then nimbly tossing the hissing bacon for the expected lord of the house.

In the midst of these preparations a tap at the door announced a visitor; King of course did not tap. Mrs. Smith opened the door, and looking into the doubtful light, perceived a woman with a cloak and hood, carrying a marketing-basket over her arm. On approaching the hearth, that grand focus of light and heat, by Mrs. Smith's invitation, she turned out to be a middle-aged person with a pert nose and twinkling eyes (by which no comparison is intended between them and stars). It was an impudent face, in short, glossed over by an expression of concern for others. Mrs. Kennedy, as this lady was called, was the greatest gossip in Ruddibourne. She was the wife of a puddler in the foundry, and devoted a good deal of her time for the public weal. Figuratively, she was a sort of Pasquin's Pillar, and a convenient medium for report-spreading. One half of her day was spent in listening at her door, with arms akimbo, to the tales which congenial beldames brought her, and the other moiety was fully occupied by gadding about from house to house, spreading the intelligence.

"And what's the best of your news, Mrs. Kennedy, Ma'am?" said Mrs. Smith, who was herself not averse to a quiet bit of running down.

"Well, Mum, it seems to me as every body's a-going wrong here. I never in my mortal days ever seed such a place as this is, for you can't trust no body at all; which, of course, I don't believe everythink I hear,—for, if that was to be the way, I'm sure nobody could live peaceably."

Mrs. Smith acquiesced, and, having placed the bacon between two warm plates, remarking, for Mrs. Kennedy's behoof, that "King was very late to-night," seated herself opposite her visitor for a comfortable gossip.

"And so there's something up, is there? ay, ay, what's the story now?" enquired the hostess.

"Hav'n't you heard ov anything?"

"No—not I—I have'n been out of the house these two days; and King, I'm sure I might as well ask the kettle there for the news; he never knows anything."

Mrs. Kennedy's little eyes twinkled with gratification. Actually here was a person who had heard not a whisper of the great news that was agitating all Ruddibourne.

"Deary me! and is it possible you have not heard?"

"Not a word. What is it?"

"Oh, dear me! it's very melancholy, it is."

Mrs. Kennedy was going through the approved recitative before the full burst of her narrative.

"And so you have heard nothing about poor George?"

"George Heath?"

"Ay, your George."

"No—what's happened?—why, I saw him at the store th' night afore last."

Mrs. Kennedy shook her head, and sighed. Mrs. King began to get troubled with a suspicion, moreover, that the news couldn't be good, else Mrs. Kennedy would not be there as their bearer.

"All the town's a-talking about it, when I was out; so I thought I would step down to you, and get the rights of it. So you've not heard yet? well, that's odd."

"Do tell me, Mrs. Kennedy, mum; I'll take it kindly if you will. Is he hurt?"

"Worse nor that."

"Oh, my poor brother!—Killed, then,—do tell me," cried poor Mrs. King, now thoroughly alarmed at the provoking manner of her visitor. The children trembled too, and ran to the folds of their mother's gown. Mrs. Kennedy was in one great gloat over her importance.

"No, no, mum, he's not hurt at all—"

"Thank goodness for that."

"But he's been dismissed from the mill."

"Dismissed from Mr. Venning's! impossible;—what for?" cried Mrs. Smith, in amazement.

"Ah! that's the bad thing. I don't like to say—"

hesitated Mrs. Kennedy, coyly.

"Oh! you can't say anything about George, sure-ly, that's bad to hear. Out with it all."

"Well, then, they say—and ov course I don't know, but that's what they say in the town; and it's quite sure that George has left; but what they do say is that George's been stealing?"

"I'll not believe it,—there now!" Mrs. Smith was up in arms immediately. "George steal! I'd as soon believe that the Queen would steal, every bit. And if that's all your news, mum, it's very little matter if there's no more."

Mrs. Kennedy was not surprised, nor yet insulted, by this outburst of feeling. If anything could have repaid her for the trouble of coming all the way down to the Smiths, it would have been a vigorous expression of unbelief on the part of George's own sister; and, in fancy, Mrs. Kennedy was drawing up a lively narrative of the scenes to be retailed on her own door-step, before many minutes were over.

"Well, mum, I did not make the story. If it's a lie, let them bear the consequences as made it. It's not likely I'd inwent such a thing. However, I thought you would like to hear—"

Mrs. Kennedy gave a slight shake to her mantle, and creaked the basket a little, in sign of intended departure. But Mrs. Smith was too anxious to hear the whole story.

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Kennedy, for speaking so hot like, only you know I'm George's sister—an' I don't believe it one bit. But do tell me what they say about the poor lad, eh?—what did he steal?"

"Gold watches and plate, and a whole boxfu' of jewellery—so they say—and tuk them to Hazeltown he did, and pawned them for a hundred pound—that's what I hear. And it turns out it's Mr. Venning's property, and his wife's gold watch, which there was a meetin' at the office to-day for to try George like, and he's been turned away. Some say he'll be tuk to court for it yet, and others say no, he's got off and won't be persecuted."

Mrs. Kennedy paused at this part for two reasons: first that Mrs. Smith might have an opportunity of saying something which might be repeated with usury on the door-step; and second, that she herself might indulge in the luxury of a private speculation as to whether George was likely to be "persecuted" or no—she being rather in favour of the affirmative side of the question. But poor Sarah Smith, wife of honest King, own sister of felon George, was dreadfully hurt. She felt there must be some truth in the story, and she was just of that species of woman who cannot comfort themselves, nor have any mental stay in the hour of trial.

After a short desultory conversation for a few minutes longer, Mrs. Kennedy rose to go, having accomplished her mission to the Smiths—and that successfully.

"I'm hoping," she said, looking as unlike the rainbow spirit as possible—"I'm hoping it mayn't be all true. They're talking through the town about it, and you'll have more news to-night yet. Only a body likes to know what people are saying, so I just thought I would tell you. Good night. Ay, ay—poor George!"

So Mrs. Smith was left to toss the bacon once more for King's supper, and tell him, munching thereof, about George. On which, swearing a good round oath that he too wouldn't believe it, the burly founder started up town to gain more certainty than attached itself in general to the gad-about Mrs. Kennedy.

## CHAPTER XX.

### DRUNK.

Gabriel Tye had been blabbing with a vengeance. When wine is in wit is out, they say, and the truth is applicable also when the brain-tenant is a viler body than the grape juice. The story, blazoned in all the heraldry of falsehood—impudent, glaring falsehood—was banded from mouth to scurrilous mouth in every corner of the working quarter of Ruddibourne. At free-and-easy working men's clubs held in low pot-houses,



murky with tobacco smoke and vocal with oaths; at decent man's hearth, or by the dirty jambs of ill-conditioned hovels; over Tommy-shop counters; at corners where uncomfortably-housed operatives lounged their idle hours away; at the reading room of the Lyceum, triumphantly; everywhere, alas everywhere, was the tale of George's downfall eagerly published. The littleness that is abroad in human nature laughs gladly at a downfall; if a so-so man trips, 'tis very well, but high carnival time when a foremost leader of the people falls—one who has passed current for good metal, and has been found out to be base counterfeit. Therefore, in the public bruit on the Heath came mingled little honest pity or kindly doubt. Everything was received as proved fact, from Tye's narrative of a night in Hazeltown down to Mrs. Kennedy's fytte touching the plate which had been stolen—nought was extenuated, that was very certain.

George, going home to his room in Spicer Street from the mill, in the middle of the day, remained there all the afternoon, deep in thought for the future. Mainwaring had said truth: he could not live longer in Ruddibourne. He must leave friends, yes, even country; he must go abroad. Mabel must be for the time forgot; it is not brave for a ruined and suspected man to go maudlin after a girl who can only share better fortunes than he can offer. With such thoughts, and in arranging his little affairs, felon Heath spent his afternoon. Packing up his books, familiar scraps of writing—all the little odds and ends which will bestrew one's room—not one would he leave carelessly about or destroy—he was going into a wilderness, and these might yet be to him the memory-ful daisy which Mungo Park's soul was stirred to meet with on the arid campaign of Africa. The evening shades, then the night, found him still at his lonely and cheerless task.

King Smith, in search of his maligned kinsman, had to pass through Jorker's Court, at least for a short cut, to get to Spicer Street. As wont was in that humid locality, knots of talkers were scattered by the open doors, and screaming, scrambling children crawled about the brink of the canal. Around Gabriel Tye, declaiming loudly from his door, was collected, hands in pocket or under apron, a larger knot than common of workmen and idle women. King, passing near the group, could scarcely avoid hearing a slice of the orator's address. Indeed he paused a moment to listen to what Gabriel was speaking so glibly and excitedly.

"—And a nice pi'neer too, isn't he?" (evidently a peroration)—"a frien' o' the working classes, wot will show them to behave themselves! Blessed if I aint ashamed o' living within a hunderd miles of 'im, I am. Called me a disgrace, he did, and everything that was bad—good, wasn't it? On'y, I don't steal gould watches (hoarse laughter at this new joke)—nor jewellery—(renewed bursts of applause)—an' I don't go a pawning other folk's property. When I wants fur to raise a little tin, I takes off my coat—(applause)—but this George Heath, he goes and prigs watches—(enthusiasm for Mr. Tye, who was virtuous)—and this mean-spirited thief—"

"Wot's the row, eh?"—"now then"—"mind your eye"—"look out"—interrupted Mr. Gabriel's oratory, as King, with a wedge movement of his sinewy frame into the core of the auditory, made his way quickly up to the speaker, and clutched him by the neck, much as a boy would handle a kitten.

"You foul-mouthed d—d scoundrel you!" cried the indignant founder, giving Gabriel a shake by way of emphasis, "So it's you as is a-goin' raisin' the lies, is it?"

"Let-me-go!" said Gabriel, chokingly, "pull—him—off—can't ye!"

But the mob was apathetic—it generally is on such occasions—and surveyed the operation of garrotting Mr. Tye with a complacency verging on satisfaction. King was too straightforward not to give the bystanders a touch of his quality too, so he exclaimed, as he held Mr. Tye in durance—

"Mates! I wonner at ye stannin' by and allowing this precious critter t' run down honest George Heath. Ye owt t' be ashamed on yourseln, ye owt."

Some excused themselves by hinting that the story might be true—but only very vaguely—King Smith was by far too powerful a man to be gainsaid.

"It's all a lie, depend on't—I'm goin' up t' see George aboot it th' now. There! you blackguard, go—kennel up wi' yo'!"

Giving Tye a final shove by the nape of the neck into his own door, which happened to be conveniently open.

"And frien's, I'll tell you what—don't condemn a man afore he's heard—good naight t'ye."

And King strode off, having effectually silenced one calumniator of his kinsman's honour.

On arriving at George's room, he found him packing a box with some of his working clothes. This rather surprised him, and George was looking careworn, too.

"Why, George, what's this yo're about, eh? Packing up—yo're not leavin' us, are you?"

Yes, King, I'm making ready to go," answered George, calmly, "I can't stay in Ruddibourne any longer. I daresay you've been hearing plenty about me already."

King was paralysed. An ordinary frame would have shaken with the sudden shock, but his metally body only relapsed into extra rigidity.

"Why—you—don't—mean—to say—" he began, slowly and emphatically. But he could not get on, and was fain to look at George bending on his knees over a little heap of cloths, with a look of intense amazement.

"You—don't—mean—to say—"

"King, you know me, and have known me since I was a child. If you've heard me called a thief, do you believe it?"

George looked at his big kinsman anxiously, for he was a favourable type of the jury of his fellows by whom his character would be decided when he was far away.

"Believe it! not I," cried King; "but what are you a-going to leave for, eh? you don't mean to be scared off by a lot o' owd wimmen a-talkin'?"

The founder was mightily relieved, and sat down with a cheerful face to keep up George's spirits a little.

"I must go, King; I'm dismissed from Mr. Vinning's employment."

Up sprang the amazed founder.

"What? dismissed! is it true then? Now, George (striking one fist heavily against the other), don't let's ha' onny secrets! out wi' it all, man: dang it, I can't see through th' business at all."

"There are circumstances against me, King, and I can't explain them away. It's not in my power; and therefore I'm going to leave."

"Circumstances," echoed Mr. Smith, lowering his eyebrows. "Well, I dunno,—but they say you went and stole gould watches, and a lot o' other things, and pledged them at Hazeltown. In course, that ain't true."

George was silent for a minute or two. There are very difficult passages in one's life when the moral courage turns traitor and flies from the field. Summoning back his wavering resolution, George answered him.

"I *did* pledge the jewellery at Hazeltown,—that's true enough, King; but I never came dishonestly by them. I cannot explain more i' the now,—it's impossible; but no doubt the time will come when you and all the people will know I'm honest. Not that I believe you think me dishonest, King,—no, no; you are an older friend than to think so meanly of me. It's a hard case to be compelled to leave Sarah and you, and all the rest; but it must be. God knows that I am innocent; and I trust in the time when He shall clear all the darkness away, and I can come back to you with an honourable name."

King had stood with bated breath, and fixed eye, when George, still kneeling on the floor, was speaking. Over his face, strange expressions were passing,—evidences of emotion not common in the mental processes of the big foundry-man. But, when George had finished, King burst forth like a molten sea of his iron ore.

"Honourable name, be damned! So it's true you ha' gine t' Hazeltown, an' sole other folk's jewels! You canna explain i' th' now, either,—you canna say where you got the things. D'ye think I'm a-goin' t' swallow an' that, George Heath?"

"But listen, King—"

"No, no. I don't want for t' have onny more words. I ha' hearn enow t' last me an' Sarah for monny a long day t' come. I ha' bin terribly out in you. Ah! I would ha' choked th' man who'd ha' said ill o' you. No wonder you want t' quit Ruddibourne. I' God's name, quit soon—for th' sake o' your frien's, as well's yourseln. I don't want t' be hard on you: but stealin'! If it had bin a murder, I'd ha' thowt more on you. Good bye, George; for sake o' owd times I'll shake han's wi' you. There's mine."

He stretched forth his brawny hand, half turning away his head. George took it, and pressed it convulsively, but could not speak a word; his heart was full. In another moment, the founder was gone, and he was again left to brood over his fate. The results were coming now; surely this must be the bitterest to bear.

He had intended to go down to see his sister and her husband, expecting from them sympathy and advice. Alas! But he would not go now.

Finishing his packing, George put on his hat to go out. In his heaviness, he was still buoyed up by the thoughts of his true-hearted Mabel, who "would bind up his wounds, and tend him if he fainted by the way;" she had said so to him. Passing downward, he emerged into the misty lamp-lighted street. That evening there was no sound of music from Gherkin's shop. In his bitterness, George said to himself that the little barber, too, had heard the news, and was shunning him. Scarcely ever, when George's foot sounded on the creaking wooden stair, had the solitary violinist failed to open his door and ask his up-above neighbour in; and seldom had George refused. He felt the defection there—most keenly. But the truth was that Gherkin had accidentally left his room for a few minutes to go an errand up-street. Gentle-hearted little Gherkin! But to a brooding fancy, the material world is pregnant with omens! everyday-contingency dovetails into a scheme of adverse Providence, which the soul arrogates to itself. Even George, with his solemn trust and unshaken belief in a higher power than man, was beginning to taste the bitterness of benefits forgot—friends remembering not.

It was George's evening at the store to look after the books, and instinctively as he got into the street he shaped his way towards the bye-quarter where the shop was situated. He met some acquaintances as he walked along, but they took no heed of him—passing him without the least recognition, or at most with a slight nod of the head. The story had truly got well abroad. One old friend, a pioneer too, he noticed coming along about fifty yards off, and a cold shudder passed over his frame when he saw him abruptly cross the street with head determinedly turned away. At length he reached the store; but he hesitated before he could make up his mind what to do. In the moment of doubt he looked through the window, and saw another pioneer partner bending over the ledger and entering the little transactions. So they, too, had judged him, and placed another in his shoes.

With a bursting heart, George turned away and walked quickly down towards the river. The town with its haze of lurid smoke was left behind, and around him, stretched in masses of chromatic shade, the star-lit fields and river. The rush of cold wind, sweeping up the channel, cooled his fevered temples, as he leant over the parapet of the bridge, thinking ungraciously—for it was such a moment—of his fellows. But, as he was thus busied, Mabel's name came with such exquisite influence on his spirit,—like the shepherd's music on the mad King Saul—and the demons trooped away. With her image filling all his heart, he struck into the hard road leading up the hill. One trust in heaven; one love on earth. His trust and his love were now to be proved.

When he reached the cottage of the Ouyths, he perceived the variable reflection of the fire on the window-blind, but no steady candle light to tell that his mistress was in. Possibly she might be, however; so he tapped hopefully at the door. No one stirred within at his summons. He rapped again more loudly, and his heart beat fast in the uncertainty of the moment. At last footsteps—not her light tread—sounded on the brick passage, and the latch was lifted. It was Martin Ouyth himself; evidently woke up from a nap by the fire, and carrying in his hand a newly-lit candle.

"Good evening, Martin; are you alone to-night?" said George, making a movement as if he would pass into the cottage, as of old. But ah! that story must have been well spread. Martin, with stern face, stood blocking the way.

"What!" he cried; "is it you, George Heath, that comes to an honest man's house, after being convicted of the lowest crime? Have you no sense of shame left, man, that doesn't tell you you're no longer welcome here?"

"God help me!" ejaculated Heath, with a groan of despair, clutching for support at the frail honeysuckle which fringed the white wall of the cottage.

"Go—go—away with you; it's a mercy my child has been saved in time."

"What of Mabel? Let me see Mabel. I will see her!"

"Mabel's not here to-night; and, if she was, you would not see her. No daughter o' mine would lower herself to the like of you. Begone with you, and never show your face here again. And may God forgive you for your double heart."

The angry gardener shut the door in his face, and snapped the bolt fiercely into its rest. Now George Heath knows the true meaning of temptation, if he



never knew it before. What is the seduction of one is no bait to draw aside another; and the miserable man, whom the grosser cares and enticements of the world could not touch, is now the prey of a more subtle power. There are men whom hours of idleness are enough to draw into the vortex of sin; men whom a slight rub through life will morally kill; men whom native love of low enjoyment lures into vice. Of these, Heath had never been; but he has not been tempted after his need; now the fiery hour is at hand. One love on earth! He goes down the hill disbelieving it,—his faith in woman for the moment gone; and, in his agony, he forgets the "trust in Heaven." Too often the case that, when we lose faith in earth, we forget heaven; a most petty revenge; weak, even in a merely moral aspect.

George re-entered Ruddibourne with his last hope extinguished; and, when a man is so utterly down as that portends, he frequently commits himself to acts for which he will be sorry all his life after. Thus strong-minded George fell into the snare of the tempter. He entered a low tavern in a bye street, frequented by keelmen employed on the river. They did not know him, nor he them; nor did they suspect, as they cut their raw bacon and bread, and quaffed their malt, that the moody mechanic drinking silently in the corner was endeavouring—how vainly!—to lull himself into forgetfulness of all his miseries.

Martin Osyth had spoken strict truth when he told George that Mabel was not at home. Lady Anne had sent a message for her to go up to the place, which the poor girl was obliged to obey. Some officious friend—always ready in this good-hearted world—had undertaken a visit that very afternoon to the Osyths' cottage, in order to have the satisfaction of startling the inmates with the news that the pattern operative of Ruddibourne had turned out to be a common thief. Confirmation of the dreadful story was brought still later in the day to Martin and Mabel. They could not doubt but that the intelligence was quite true. Whilst her father stormed and swore in his anger, the almost broken-hearted girl loved her George as tenderly as ever, and (sweet fruit of firm attachment) felt that such a nature as his was incapable of crime so mean as theft. It was in vain to insinuate such a belief to her father, and Mabel counted the dreary hours as they wandered on, helpless and unwept what was to be done.

When she returned from Lady Anne, Mabel learnt from her father that George had called in her absence, and had been driven from the door. She burst into a flood of passionate tears. Her father was silent; his heart told him that in such a case words, except such as he was not willing to speak, would be cruel. At length she dried her cheeks, and said, with forced calmness:

"Father, I must go and see George."

"Impossible, Mabel. It is not proper—even if he were as we thought him, an honest man."

"I must go and see George."

"What! and make it up with a convicted thief? A pretty thing to do, truly. No, Mabel, be glad you've made such an escape."

"I must go and see George."

It was in vain to argue against the girl's resolution. She went, with convulsive sobs marring the deadly repose of her face, and put on her shawl and hat. Her father did not interfere; but, as she was going out, he said, more kindly:

"If you must go, Mabel, I'll go with you."

"No, Father. I'll go alone. If you can't trust poor George, I can. Come what will, it's better we see each other face to face, and know the worst. He won't deceive me; and, if we have to part—"

Another sob choked her utterance; and, hastily opening the door, she sped quickly along the road, glistening with its crystallization in the frosty starlight.

The night was pretty far advanced when Mabel arrived at Spicer Street, and there was no one within sight when she softly ascended the stairway leading to George's room. She tapped very gently, but there was no answer. He was out, then; and poor Mabel's heart sank at the thought. But it occurred to her that she might write him a letter, if by any means she could get into the room, where she knew were plenty of materials for such a purpose. On the spur of the thought Mabel pressed the handle of the door; it yielded, and she entered the room. A feeble fire on the hearth-place lit up the chamber indistinctly; and Mabel advanced towards the table, groping for a candle. At length she found it, and succeeded in getting a light from the red embers. The wick sputtered and smoked into a yellow flame at

last; and, placing it on the table again, Mabel cast her eyes round the room in search of pen, ink, and paper."

She almost shrieked with alarm to see George Heath with his clothes on lying carelessly stretched across the bed. There was something in his appearance that filled her with a vague, terrible fear. His face was turned downwards on the clothes; his arms tossed wildly over the side; and now she could hear, distinctly hear, his stertorous breathing. Was it a natural sleep? She crossed the room and stood by him.

"George—George, here I am."

No response from her lover, though her hand, which had often thrilled its touch to his heart before, was laid on his shoulder.

"George—dear George, are you ill?"

Still no answer from the inanimate form stretched unheedingly across the coverlet. The solitary woman grew alarmed at the ominous insensibility of her lover. With trembling hands she bent round his head, bringing his face into view. Such a face as it was that met Mabel's gaze. Oh! that was not one of the wounds she had promised to bind up, the blight of intoxication. A ghastly consciousness of her lover's state came across her poor heart, and she sank utterly dispirited and hopeless upon a chair, still retaining his feverish hand in hers.

But a strange spirit came upon her as she sat, and falling on her knees, she prayed for him who had succumbed in the hour of fiery trial. She knew not how low the descent might have been, but she prayed for strength.

As Mabel, in broken accents mingled with weeping, asked of heaven forgiveness and strength for George, the door was softly opened (not disturbing the watcher on the field of battle, watching by the fallen), and Gherkin looked in for a moment, his patient face marked with concern for the goaded man whom he had seen a short time before brought home by strangers insensible. When he perceived Mabel, he quietly withdrew, and left her undisturbed.

At length she arose, and having bathed his face and hands with cold water, kissed his throbbing forehead. She then placed water within reach on the table, and, having thrown some clothes over him, retreated slowly to the door. Weeping, she looked fondly on her lover, for it was the last time perhaps she would ever see him, and once more returned to kiss him. Then, with a quickened footstep she passed out of the room, closing the door softly behind her.

Sleep on! take out the measure of thy sin's indulgence, heavy price thou hast paid for the oblivion of a few fleeting hours. Sleep on! whilst that true earthly love thou didst doubt is weeping for thee, along the dark and dreary wold, up the frowning gorge, and under the peaceful thatch, all the long vigils of the night. Sleep on! too soon thou wilt wake to vain regrets—to the humbling knowledge how frail a thing thou art.

As for Gherkin, he had it not in his heart to fiddle that night, so he took up his last copy of "Guarnerius," and thrummed it with his fingers instead of a bow, producing thereby the tone of a Spanish guitar vocalizing through its nose.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### NOT WITHOUT HOPE.

Next day a rumour arose that George Heath was going to America—that evening, per rail to Liverpool, thence abroad. He had dissolved his connection with the Pioneer Store, had settled all his affairs, and was going to America. Prancer, by Mrs. Ptolemy's hot kitchen fire, had heard that George was going to America, and she cried heartily at the news. She had made one or two efforts to see George when out upon messages of housekeeping import, but had failed, and the next intelligence was that in a few hours more he was going far away. So Prancer was sad at heart. Mrs. Venning, lying torpid in her bed, after a season of vain regrets, heard the news from her husband—poor woman, poor woman!

And the news was true. When George woke in the morning, after that night of trial and failure, with heated brow and aching heart, he felt that delay was indeed dangerous, that he must take up scrip and staff—away, away, even to a dreary life by the most venomous meer in the land of the setting sun.

So when the last train was due at the Ruddibourne station George Heath was waiting for its arrival, with his chest containing his all rolled and ready for America, on the platform. It is a dreary thing to start abroad,

and not a friend to say God speed ye. George was thinking this, when—

"Weel, George, an' you're for aff, are ye!" enquired Leslie, in his blue coat and brass buttons, clapping him on the shoulder, "Man, what for did ye not come and see me?"

"God bless you, Allan, for those words," cried Heath, shaking the old man's hand warmly, "I have much need of all your kindness. I have been judged and despised—but do you believe—"

"Believe? no a word o' it," said Leslie, taking a pinch from the snuff-box, "I never heard such a clash in all my born days. Just a perfect string o' havers. I hae refleckit sair on the matter for your sake, and I hae come to the conclusion it's perfectly impossible that you can be guilty o' thievin'—let alone your character, which would na thole such a suspicion."

"There's a mystery, Leslie, about it which I cannot deny nor yet explain," said George, earnestly, "but I am innocent of such a vile thing as robbing my benefactors. Oh believe me!"

"I do believe ye, George—but man, where are ye going to?—the folks say it's to Amerriky, but, pity me, that's a long way off. I hae a brither oot there too, and I've brought a letter till him, to give ye. We hae na corresponded for many years, but I daresay by this time he'll be a rich man in the colony. There it is," continued Leslie, giving George a letter, "the address is Maister David Leslie, Cannidy West. I dinna ken if you'll be goin' in his direktion or no, for I dinna ken his richt address, but if you do, just gie him this letter, an' he'll nae doubt make ye welcome for my sake."

"Thank'ee, Allan,—I'll do so, if he's within a hundred mile where I am. I don't know yet exactly where I'll land. At present I intend Canada, but it will depend on what I hear on my arrival. I believe there are some factories in Upper Canada where I might find work, but I cannot tell till I go."

At this moment, old Tom, fresh from the cobblerly, came stumping across the wooden platform—a performance attended with some risk to the veteran's posthumous leg which had a natural tendency to go through the wide seams prevailing at railway stations—for the double purpose of carrying off rain, and tickets, casually dropt by nervous passengers. Old Tom extended his hand frankly to George, who found he had yet friends left to give him heart again.

"What!" cried the cobbler, pleasantly—but, old fellow, he was affected all the same,—"so you were off without saying good-bye to old friends."

Poor George was going to recount his sad protestation of innocence—but the kindly-hearted soldier saw through the movement immediately, and outflanked him.

"Going away you were to Ameriky without ever saying 'Tom, good-bye.' There—there! I've said my say. 'Tis a terrible cowl'd place that same 'Meriky they tell me,—freezes you up like a pit of old parchment. Now, look here!—"

Tom held out his Peninsular fur-helmet admiringly towards George and Allan.

"That's the fellow to keep sentry over your ears, I can tell you! You should have seen me on the outlying guard in Spain; Lor! bless you, as comf'able as if I wor in bed. See, now, you take this to 'Meriky,—I'll be bound there's good in the old fur yet—"

"But, Tom!—take your old friend?—no, no, thank'ee, Tom—it's very mindful of you, but I could not take it."

George could have cried,—time and place suitable,—which they never are for the display of good, genuine emotion.

"Ah! but you must take it. Isn't it too bad" (appeals now to the Scotchman) "that my old friend, George, won't come an' see me afore he's going away; and when I stump up after him, he won't take a poor gift like this. I declare I'll not have it now. Old fur! attention! you're going on sarvice again, and see that you do your duty by your master."

Having thus addressed the helmet-shaped bonnet, Tom handed it over to George, who took it at length as earnest of a better future than in his despair he had imagined for himself. And whilst they were talking cheerily together—never alluding—for oh! there is soul-polish in the humble, if not outside varnish,—to the miserable cause of George's leaving, there was a slight commotion amongst the corduroyed porters. One seized a bell and began to ring it violently; another said sternly to an old lady, "Now, then,"—thereby rendering her incapable for the space of two minutes; whilst others stood at ease along the brink of the line



waiting to lay hold of brass handles, passengers, and luggage; the train was coming.

"Good bye, God bless you!"

"Good bye —"

"Now, then, take your seat, please," said an excited guard to George, dallying with the hard hands of his friends in his.

"Once more, good bye —"

"God bless you!"

He was getting into a carriage, the doors were in course of being banged up by the porters in double knocker style, the engine was panting to be off—when George was pulled by some one from behind. It was little Gherkin, wofully out of breath, for locomotion was not an easy accomplishment with the violinist. George was a little surprised to see him, for he had said good-bye to him as he passed down stairs for the last time—and very sorry the little man had been on the occasion.

"I'd forgot something—last night—when you'd come home you know" (tender Gherkin) "I went up to see arter a bit—"

"All right," shouted the guard, following up the statement with a whistle.

"Go on quick!" cried George, as he felt the train in motion.

"Now, then, come off there!" a harsh voice, backed by an arm, tried to disentangle Gherkin from the step of the moving carriage. With a desperate effort he clung to the iron-work, and cried out, as the noise grew louder and louder,—

"I saw a young lady—Mabel Oxyth—she was —"

The train had reached the furthest limit of the platform, and Gherkin was compelled to jump off at random, alighting, luckily without hurt, quite "promiskus," as a guard expressed it. The good-hearted creature was forthwith pounced upon by a phalanx of officials and threatened with by-laws, but was eventually allowed to depart in peace.

The train swept on, with its bleared eyes of red looking into the gloom of the night, carrying its freight of a-many hopes and fears. But as for George Heath, his heart was humbly thankful now—penitent for sin. His way lay through the world at large, mayhap, but his footsteps were not to be blindly placed. He had, indeed, one trust in heaven—one love on earth; and neither would fail him in his wanderings over the green-shaded foam, through the battalions forest.

(To be continued.)

#### THE CARTE DE VISITE.

Her little carte lies there,  
The lines of dusk and fair  
By sunlight graven:  
The look that wrought the carte  
Lies in my inmost heart,  
Its fittest haven.

Her beauty's far renown  
Made the great sun look down  
From heaven above her,  
And when he saw her best  
He gave this, a bequest  
To all who love her;

He stamp'd with amorous light  
The lines of dark and white  
In rounded cluster,  
But could not paint the fair  
Silk softness of her hair,  
Her eyes' deep lustre.

His strength was all too weak  
To tinge her changeful cheek  
Soft as the peaches,  
Or give her lips' repose  
The loveliness which grows  
With gentle speeches.

How delicately well  
Her bosom rose and fell,  
He could not show it:  
And how on this scant carte  
Depict the sweetest heart  
That beats below it?

No: it is poor at best;  
But let it lie at rest:  
The book shall win it:  
And be the page as white,  
As is my soul to-night,  
While She is in it.

#### MINNA WENLOCK.

##### CHAPTER I.

Minna always used to sit by me in church. Her father and mine went shares in a pew in the church of a popular preacher somewhere at the West End—I forget the clergyman's name—I even forget where the church was—but the man himself I shall never forget. I have no hesitation in saying that he was a striking preacher. I know that the first time I was taken to hear him I was taken out again, very soon after the sermon began, roaring violently. Directly he got into the pulpit his eyes began wandering to find a victim; at last he fixed them on our pew, and began to make a series of grossly personal allusions to the fact of my having eaten too much plum cake the evening before—at least so my guilty conscience interpreted his words. After this somewhat unfavourable introduction, the terror that man inspired me with was something awful. He had a way of turning up the sleeves of his coat and asking the godless man, who seemed usually to sit under the gallery, to come out and wrestle with him. It is, perhaps, needless to say that the godless man invariably declined the conflict. I got used to this in time, but at first it was a grievous disappointment. I think I may confidently state that, in the opinion of the juvenile part of the congregation, the godless man would have had decidedly the best of it. I attended that church for only half a year, but the preacher left an indelible impression on my mind. I only heard my friend again—six years afterwards. His church was very empty, but I observed that the godless man was still there, sitting in about the same place that he formerly occupied, and showing, I am sorry to say, the same sad want of pluck.

The great bond of union between Minna and myself was our hatred of that clergyman. I cannot deny that we quarrelled occasionally over the distribution of sweetmeats and other trifling matters, but on that one point we always agreed. Indeed we had serious thoughts of appealing to the godless man to release us from our troubles, or at all events make a stand-up fight of it. We thought that our enemy, even if victorious, would receive considerable punishment, and we naturally felt that that would be a great consolation to us. Our enterprise, however, failed from the difficulty of communicating with our champion. When my father moved to another part of London I left that church and lost sight of Minna Wenlock. I had never seen her since she was of the mature age of seven.

I was sitting in my chambers one morning after luncheon, smoking, and reading law, when Charley Hawkins walked in, looking restless and melancholy. I knew what has come directly I saw him; there is no mistaking that look—something had happened, and he was going to confide in me. Everybody confides in me! Why, except that I hate it, I'm sure I don't know.

"I was just passing by here," began Charley, "and so I thought I would look in and see how you are getting on."

"Oh, I'm hard at work reading law," I said. But I am afraid I have not much moral courage, for when I saw Charley sit down and deliberately take his gloves off, I felt that I should give in without another struggle.

"I say, what do you think?"

"Well," I said, rousing myself for a final effort, "I was thinking that the difference between a contingent remainder and a springing—"

"Oh, no shop! I didn't mean that—I have something to tell you."

I felt it was all over with me, and as it was to come, it had better come quickly, so I said nothing.

"I say, old fellow—I'm in love." I must do him the justice to say that he looked rather confused as he made this confession; but as to my certain knowledge Charley had been in a chronic state of love ever since he was four years old, the gravity of the announcement did not startle me. I merely nodded an acknowledgment of the fact, and said, "I know—Emily Blair—you told me about that a month ago."

"No, no," he said, "it's not Emily; that was a passing fancy, this is an affection which will last my life,"—or something to that effect. We have all heard the sentiment before. I had frequently heard it from Charley at different times with reference to different idols, consequently I did not feel overwhelmed by the intensity of his passion.

"Well, and when is the happy event to come off; is it to be to-morrow, or the day after?" I asked, quietly

puffing at my pipe, and adopting a playful and sarcastic tone at which I am so successful.

"Don't be a fool; I only met her the day before yesterday, at the Mowbrays'."

"Oh, she was at the Mowbrays? Which was it—the girl in blue with the snub nose, or that pretty Miss Dawkins?"

"No; it's Minna Wenlock—she's staying there."

"Minna how much?"

"Wenlock. That girl in pink with dark hair."

"Her hair was light and curly."

"No it isn't."

"Of course an acquaintance of two days enables you to pronounce an opinion on the colour of a young lady's hair twelve years ago," I said, reverting to gentle sarcasm; "but I still maintain my assertion that her hair used to be light and curly."

"You don't mean to say you know her?"

"Why, it does not seem as if I did, but I knew a Minna Wenlock years ago."

"I say, I was going to the Mowbrays; suppose you come and see if this is your old acquaintance?"

"You were going to the Mowbrays? Why, you shameless villain, you were there only yesterday."

"Well, you see, I forgot my umbrella yesterday, and I was going to get it, and I thought we might just look in and see how they are."

"Oh! you left your umbrella?"

"Yes, I left my umbrella." And I am glad to say Charley blushed.

I would not go to the Mowbrays—not that I did not care to see Minna, if she were really there, but I did not want Charley's company—so he went off alone to get his umbrella.

I sat down, lit another pipe, and began recalling all my recollections of Minna. I wondered what kind of woman the curly-headed little girl I remembered had grown into. I wondered what kind of woman the little girl I remembered had grown into. I wondered whether she was going to be married and live to be happy ever afterwards. Of course she would be happy. My ideas of matrimonial felicity are, I am afraid, rather exaggerated. Should I not have been happy with Julia, if—well, well, never mind; Julia thought otherwise, and married a captain with big whiskers. My whiskers are not large, and I always hated military ones.

##### CHAPTER II.

We had cantered up Rotten Row and down again, and I do not think we had spoken once the whole time. I had been looking at Minna, and thinking what a pretty girl she had grown to be, how well her habit fitted her, how well she sat on her horse, what a pretty colour her hair was, and a hundred other things, all connected with Minna. It was now three weeks since Charley Hawkins had incidentally led me to the discovery of Minna. I had lost little time in renewing our acquaintance, and by this time we had almost returned to the intimacy of our childhood.

We had not spoken a word for twenty minutes. What Minna had been thinking of all this time I cannot pretend to say. Our canter had subsided into a trot, then into a walk, when a great raw-boned chestnut came cantering up, and suddenly stopped on the other side of Minna, and a voice muffled in a pair of huge moustaches said, "How do you do, Miss Wenlock?"

The voice belonged to a great hulking beast—as I immediately pronounced him to be, and I still stick to my opinion.

"Alfred," said Minna, turning to me, "let me introduce you—I don't think you know each other; Mr. Stanton, Captain —," somebody, I couldn't catch the name. I turned to talk to Mr. Wenlock, and Minna and the captain began a review of mutual acquaintances, laughing and joking over a hundred incidents of which I knew nothing. I had been silent before, and now that I had wanted to talk I could not get a chance. How could Minna chatter so with that idiot? You see I had already settled to my own satisfaction the intellectual capacities of that son of Mars. I was very glad when Mr. Wenlock cut short the conversation by proposing it was time to go to luncheon, and the gallant captain bowed himself off.

"What's that man's name?" I asked Minna, as we turned to go home.

"That man's name is Captain Sperling, and that man is a friend of papa's."

"Indeed! I thought he was a friend of yours; he did not seem to favour Mr. Wenlock with much of his conversation," I said, in my most pungent and sarcastic tone.



"I suppose papa's friends may talk to me if they like, mayn't they?" said Minna, laughing.

"Oh, certainly!—if you like," and I cut Sultan over the ears with my whip. Sultan, being unused to such treatment, resented the insult by putting his head down and kicking violently for a couple of minutes. In the struggle my hat fell off, and as it was handed to me by the groom I had the satisfaction of seeing Minna in fits of laughter.

"Dear me, dear me," said Mr. Wenlock, as I came up with them, "how muddy your hat is! Curious thing—hats always fall off in the muddiest places."

"Is it spoilt?" said Minna, with a queer twinkle in the corner of her eye?

I preserved a dignified silence, and continued my occupation of removing the mud from my hat.

"You had better wait till it's dry. Hats always spoil if you touch them when they are wet."

"Thank you—I think I will go to a hatter and get him to put it right. Good morning," and I turned to go.

"You had better come in and have some luncheon on your way."

"No, thank you; I am afraid I have work to do at the temple."

"Oh, papa! you know we must not take Alfred away from his legal studies," and that same miserable twinkle was in the corner of her eye.

I rode off fully convinced that I had behaved to Minna in a severe and dignified manner. Her levity was really reprehensible, and determined to console myself for my lost luncheon and cosy chat afterwards by a good afternoon's work in chambers. In a few hours the conviction forced itself upon me that I had made a fool of myself—that conviction has gradually been strengthened.

"I say, Stanton," said Charley, some days after this, as the long vacation drew near, "what are you going to do this vac.?"

"Well, I was going to Switzerland with Donell, but I have given that up. That brute, Perkins, insisted on joining us, and Donell says he did promise to go with him one year, and doesn't like to throw him over, so I got off."

"If you are about that part of the world, come down to Warley on the first; we shall have a jolly party, and the governor has improved the shooting since you were there."

"Thanks; I'll come."

"That's all right. The Wenlocks will be there."

### CHAPTER III.

Warley Hall is about a mile from the town of the same name, a struggling little seaport, like a dozen others, that dot the coast. It is a dirty place, but there is variety in its dirt. It is red in some places, black in others, sometimes redder, sometimes blacker, as iron ore or coal predominates. The men are red or black, the houses are red or black, as if the town were divided into two factions of coal and iron. Some of the houses, it is true, have attempted to preserve a neutrality, and have aimed at being white. This subterfuge is evidently looked upon as mean. The stains upon them show that attempts have been made to make them pronounce an opinion the one way or the other. The attempts have failed. But the houses have now an undecided look about them which contrasts unfavourably with the sturdy and grim partisanship of their neighbours. The children, it need hardly be said, have a Solonian horror of neutrality; perhaps not so much on account of their decision of character as from a rooted antipathy to water.

When I got to the Hall it was nearly dinner-time. Everybody was dressing, and I saw no one till I came into the drawing room, very hungry. There I found the Mowbrays and Miss Hawkins, who immediately began overwhelming me with questions about everything and everybody. Then Miss Mowbray attacked me. She keeps her eye fixed on the ground while you are speaking to her, and occasionally shoots up a killing glance. Her eyelashes are long; they show better when her eyes are down, they would not be so much noticed if she looked up. She speaks rather indistinctly; she does not open her mouth much; her teeth are not regular enough for that. You have to stoop down to hear what she says, and that gives a confidential air to the conversation, and which makes the women hate her. I think she rather likes being hated by them. It is a distinction not difficult of attainment.

"Do you know," she began, "your old friend Minna Wenlock is here?"

Yes, I had heard it.

"Oh, how clever you are! you know everything."

"Does he? I wish Mr. Stanton would tell me what's to win next year's Derby," yawned Captain Sperling, who was straddling, like a bold Briton, before the fire.

"Oh, you droll creature! he's not a prophet," and the battery of eyes opened on the captain, who stood the fire remarkably well.

I walked to the window and looked out. Through the tops of the trees planted on the slope below I could see the river sweeping round toward the town; beyond the river the ground rose, and, in a dark patch of turnips on the side of the hill, two men with two white specks moving before them.

"How well those dogs work," I said to Captain Sperling, who had lounged up to the window after me.

"Yes, but they'll be deuced late for dinner."

"Who are they?"

"Young Hawkins and Captain Brown,—there's a point." And presently two little puffs of smoke made two white patches against the dark turnip field.

"Mr. Stanton is too much occupied to speak to us, Minna," I heard Miss Mowbray say, as I turned from the window and saw Minna standing by the fire-place.

"For whom are we waiting?" said old Mr. Hawkins, looking at his watch. "It is a quarter past seven, and dinner is ready."

"Captain Brown and Charley have not come in."

"Never wait for young men, do we, Miss Wenlock? Stanton, take Miss Wenlock," and off we went.

"Do you know, Alfred," began Minna, after we were seated at the table, "I am going away to-morrow?"

"Going! where?"

I think my voice and face must have betrayed what an interest I felt in Minna's movements, for she looked earnestly at her soup-plate, and began talking very fast.

"Papa wants me to join him in Scotland on Saturday, and I had promised the Browns to go and spend a few days with them, so I must go; and if I go to-morrow I shall only have two days with them, and I could not propose to go for a shorter time, could I? For my part, I would much sooner stay here; but it's all settled now."

Well, here was what I believe gentlemen who indulge in pugilistic encounters would call "a facer." Here was I, who had given up Switzerland on purpose to hang about with the chance of seeing Minna (for, between ourselves, Perkins is not a bad fellow, and my antipathy to him was exaggerated to suit the occasion); I who had stayed in town till the end of August with the view of improving my mind in the present and my pocket in the future, and had solaced myself with the idea of a delicious holiday with Minna at Warley, and now I should only see her for one evening—it was too bad.

"But I don't see why I should bore you with my plans; you will have a pleasant visit here, I've no doubt."

Minna, Minna, that was cruel, and you knew it.

"I don't think I shall," I said, and I thought Minna looked rather pleased at the contradiction. "I had looked forward to it very much, but now—" and I am afraid I looked rather foolish.

"Hush," said Minna, turning to me; "here is Captain Brown; you must not say anything to him of my likes or dislikes."

I had hardly any opportunity again that evening of talking to Minna.

After the ladies had gone to bed, I went to smoke with Charley Hawkins. His deep attachment for Minna had evaporated under the influence of more recent flames.

"Nice girl, Minna Wenlock, isn't she?" he said, as we took up our candlesticks to go to bed.

"Yes."

"They say Sperling is spooney on her. He's going to stay with the Browns. You know young Brown is to marry his sister."

"Who says so?" I said, adverting to the first part of his information.

"Well, Laura Brown told me."

This blow, following on that which I had received in the earlier part of the evening, sent me to bed in a state of the deepest dejection.

I have found that my profoundest thoughts and most brilliant ideas generally come just before I fall asleep. So it was that night. The Browns' house was near the second station up the line, and on Saturday Minna was going to Scotland. To go there she must pass Warley. The idea was decidedly a brilliant one. How I developed it will appear.

### CHAPTER IV.

"And so, Minna, you are off to Scotland on Saturday," I said, next morning, in the breakfast-room, affecting an indifference I am afraid I did not feel. "That mid-day train is a capital one."

"Is it? Papa told me to travel by it. Mrs. Rowe is to meet me at Carlisle and escort me on; from the Browns to Carlisle I must manage without an escort."

So far so good. Then I made my second plunge.

"Have the Browns many people staying with them?" I asked, in my most innocent manner.

"Not many, I believe. Mrs. Brown's rheumatism has been so bad that they have put off most of those whom they expected."

"Hawkins tells me your friend, Captain Sperling, is going there. He is some relation of the Browns, isn't he?"

"Is he?" said Minna, looking out of the window. I felt very homicidally inclined towards the gallant captain.

"He's not a particular friend of mine," she added, after a pause, turning round with a smile. "I know you never liked him, principally, I believe, because you can't cultivate such magnificent whiskers. But he is rather a bore, and I don't like him as well—as I used to do."

Oh, Minna, Minna! why did not I hug you on the spot. I believe I should have done so, or otherwise misconducted myself, had I not heard the rustling of a dress, and Miss Mowbray's voice saying, "Oh, what a charming *tête-à-tête*! I am so sorry I interrupted it."

Minna left soon after breakfast.

Saturday came at last—a fine, bright, frosty morning.

"Such a scent lying! Let's go out shortly after breakfast," said Charley. "We'll shoot down by the bourne side to-day, Stanton; there are old Ingle turnips, we haven't been there this season."

"I am afraid I must go off to Carlisle to-day," I said, as consciously as I could. "I'm quite out of cartridges, and if there is a good gunsmith there I should like him to look at the locks of my breech-loader—they are rather out of order."

"What a bore!" said Charley. "Haven't you enough cartridges for to-day? I'll go with you to Carlisle if you'll put it off till Monday."

I managed to decline this offer, and at twelve o'clock drove down to Warley to meet the Scotch express.

When the train drew up at the platform I rushed down the line of carriages trying to find Minna. I had almost given it up, when, in the corner of a compartment which I had passed over as empty, I saw a bit of a bonnet and a brown shawl which I knew.

"That compartment's engaged, sir; plenty of room in the next," said the guard, opening the door of the next compartment.

"All right—a young lady from Alltown—I've come to meet her;" and after some scrutiny my plea was allowed, the door was unlocked, and I got in trying to look unconscious. I am afraid it was a failure; I remember I thought it was at the time, and Minna tells me she thought so too. Where was I going to? only to Carlisle—how very odd we should meet. I think I blushed, and I am sure Minna did. The train started again, and we were alone in the carriage. But now the opportunity had come my courage had oozed away. Minna took up a book and began reading resolutely, vouchsafing only an occasional monosyllable in answer to my spasmodic attempts at conversation. I looked at my watch; ten minutes had passed, and I had made no progress.

"Minna," I began, screwing up my courage; but Minna was looking out of the window, and broke in with, "What a pretty house, and what fine old trees, so much finer than you generally see in Cumberland, and what a beautiful river!—is it the Eden?"

It was the Eden, and I told her so. Then she wanted to know where it rose, and where it flowed to. Then she developed a great curiosity to know the names of the hills on the right, and then of those on the left; in fact, for some time her appetite for local information was insatiable. A pause came, and I looked at my watch. Half an hour had passed; in ten minutes we should be at Carlisle.

Now or never; I went and sat down on the seat beside her.

"Minna," I began, plunging at once into a little speech, which I had concocted two days before, and had been revising and correcting ever since, and which I then believed to be a model of pure English and many pathos. "Minna," I said, "if the devotion of a lifetime—" so far I got, but after that the speech was



forgotten, and I went on in a more disconnected but perhaps a more natural way. What I did say does not much matter—Minna thought it could not have been done better, and after all she was the chief person interested. To the world in general it might seem rather foolish, and, to confess the truth, I really have no very distinct remembrance of what it was.

All I know is, that we were roused from a very pleasant dream by a voice shouting at the carriage window, "Carlisle." And not many months afterwards my name appeared in the second paragraph of the first column of the *Times*, closely followed by that of a certain Minna, who from that time ceased to be Minna Wenlock.

## A MISTAKE AND ITS RESULTS.

### CHAPTER I.

It seems a long time ago since the journey from Cork to Dublin took two days. There are those living, I suppose, who remember when it was a matter of three or four, but I speak of a more modern period, albeit the railway from Dublin to Kingstown was then the only one in Ireland. At this time, Bianconi's large four-horse cars formed the grand trunk from the south to the metropolis; while smaller vehicles, meeting the principal conveyance at different points, acted as branch-lines to the main one. From one of these latter I took the large car at Mitchelstown on an intensely cold day, the last or last but one of October, 18—. I was going to Dublin for my Michaelmas Term examinations in Trinity College; and having idled the whole summer, I felt some apprehension about the result of the ordeal through which I had to pass, and wondered much whether I should come back "plucked." The dark leaden sky, and the cutting north-east wind, were in dreary keeping with the sombre thoughts that troubled me. I occupied the box-seat, an honour that was dearly purchased by facing the blast; and Stapleton, the driver, predicted snow (early in the season as it was) before we reached Kilkenny, our destination for that night. We delayed for half an hour, I remember, at Clonmel about two o'clock; there was a good deal of excitement in the town, from the expectation of a special commission for the trial of prisoners connected with two terrible agrarian murders of recent occurrence in the South Riding of Tipperary. As we journeyed on, the driver entertained me with details of different outrages that he knew of, pointing out, now and again, the scenes where they took place, and winding up with the ominous announcement: "Mark my words for it, but the Ribbon boys will give them enough to do this winter; they won't let much grass grow under the peelers' feet anyways."

I forget now how many stages we had travelled from Clonmel when we stopped to change horses at a small public-house on the roadside; something was amiss with the shoe of one of the horses, and a sharp altercation ensued between the driver and the stable-boy on the subject, that ended with an injunction to "hurry off like blazes" to a neighbouring forge for the smith to remedy the defect. As I foresaw that there would be some delay, I proposed to one or two of my travelling companions to join me in a run to warm our feet until the bar overtook us. As they declined, I set off alone, calling back to Stapleton, when I was a few paces on, to know if there were any turns upon the road.

"No, sir," he replied; and then added: "keep to the left, and you'll be all right."

Laughing at this unintentional pun, and repeating the old couple to myself:

If you go to the left, you'll be sure to go right,  
If you go to the right, you'll go wrong—

I dashed on at full speed, and very soon noticing a road that branched off at right angles to the main one, I concluded that this was the reason of his direction. I was at all times a very swift runner, while the intense cold of the evening braced my energies still more. "By Jove!" I exclaimed, "I'll astonish them a bit: old Jehu will think I'm lost before he picks me up;" and the expectation of gaining credit by my prowess as a walker, accelerated my speed to unusual rapidity. The day, I have already remarked, was specially gloomy, and the evening shadows were now darkening into night with more than ordinary swiftness. Once I was for a moment at fault about the road, as I came upon a slight divergence from the direct line, but recalling Stapleton's words—"keep to the left"—I followed that direction, and trudged on upon this unknown way into

the thickly-gathering darkness. At last I began to wonder why the car did not come up; but concluding that the smith's operations caused the delay, I still went forward until the road became unusually rough and broken; and then, as far as the dim light allowed, I observed that the vegetation at the sides encroached far more than I had ever known upon a mail-coach road. "Oh, 'tis impossible that I can have gone astray!" I exclaimed, not allowing the unpleasant thought to intrude; and I still continued my course, though at a more doubtful pace, until I suddenly halted on perceiving that the narrowing line of roadway appeared to cease altogether, and I found myself actually walking on moist, boggy ground. "Where on earth am I?" I cried, in consternation, peering round through the darkness. As far as I could descry, I seemed to have wandered into some moor or commonage that stretched along the base of a steep acclivity; not a sound could I hear on any side, but the moaning sigh of the wind as it swept by with penetrating bitterness, and once the wild cry of some bird, startled from its rest by my approach. I made two or three efforts, but they proved ineffectual, to retrace my steps, and each time I became more bewildered, stumbling over rocky projections or roots of trees, and occasionally sinking ankle-deep into wet, miry ground. "God help me!" I exclaimed at last, in utter despair, and almost bursting into tears of vexation. "I'll have to wander about here all night, and perish with cold before morning." Another desperate effort to reach some pathway met with a like issue, save that by, I suppose, some consequent change of position, a bright light suddenly broke upon me, so bright and so close, that I was considerably startled at the unexpected appearance.

I thought of the Will-o'-the-wisp, and fancied, from the evident nature of the ground, that it might be the meteor of the marsh; but as I moved cautiously forward, I saw that it came through the open door of a cabin, and a closer access showed me why I had not sooner detected it. The tenement before me was curiously constructed; the ground on three sides rose at a considerable elevation, and it seemed as if a deep, cavernous recess had been formed in the yielding soil, and in it this rude habitation erected. I walked straight to the door, but saw no one within or immediately near the cabin; the light came from a large peat-fire, piled upon a hearthstone at one side of the room; and so bright was the illumination, that it not only disclosed every object inside, but enabled me to notice distinctly the nature and peculiarity of the building without. I hesitated to enter, notwithstanding the tempting look of the fire, where there was no one to invite me. I called loudly once or twice, but no reply came; and at length I passed within the doorway, and proceeded without ceremony to warm my chilled limbs at the welcome blaze. "Some one is sure to be here in two or three minutes," I thought; "this fire has been freshly made up." The room where I stood seemed to be the only one the place could boast of, and wretched enough it was: an old bedstead, with a tattered curtain, occupied one corner; beside the fire rose a huge pile of dried sticks flung loosely together, that nearly reached to the ceiling; a large log of timber against the wall at the side opposite the fire, formed a kind of rude seat; while a stool or two, and an old rickety table made up the remainder of the furniture. When some short time elapsed, I began to feel a little nervous at the position in which I found myself; apart from the vexation I experienced at having gone astray, and the difficulty I might find in reaching Dublin in time for my college duties, I remembered the troubled state of the country; and this lonely spot, at the foot of some mountain, was no desirable place to be caught in at night, alone and unarmed.

### CHAPTER II.

I was deliberating whether I had better make another attempt to find my way, or stay until some one came, when the dead silence was broken by the noise of evidently more than one person approaching. As the parties came nearer, I could discern that some conflict or struggle was going on; at first, there were no voices, but a peculiar panting sound, such as accompanies the movement of people where effort is met by resistance, until at length, in a low, deep voice, like the growl of a mastiff, the words reached me: "Curse you, will you come on? I'll knock you on the head, if you don't." The ominous tone in which this brief sentence was uttered, evidently close to the doorway, made me bound back from the glare of the fire, and, without a moment's thought, I glided in behind the pile of brushwood

before referred to, between which and the end-wall of the cabin a narrow passage afforded bare space for concealment. I had scarcely effected my purpose, when three men entered the apartment, or rather two dragged in another between them. "Shut the door, Bill," gasped the elder of the two, for he was out of breath, and perspiring profusely. The younger man addressed as Bill complied, and then drew a large iron bar across the closed entrance. The screen behind which I was ensconced was so loosely constructed that I could see through the interstices all that went forward, while I devoutly hoped that it would prove sufficient to hide me from observation. The third individual of the party, who seemed to have been brought in as a prisoner, was a mere stripling, did not look more than twenty, and had, I could notice by the firelight, an expression of extreme alarm on his pale young face as he looked upon his captors. "There!" cried the elder man, giving him a violent push backwards, and shaking his closed fist at him, "you are cocht at last, you miserable spalpeen, you! I had my eye upon you when you little thought it. I suspected you even the very night you took the oath; and to-night I tracked you down to the police barrack, and saw what you were after; but as there's a heaven above us, it's the last chance you'll ever get of doing the like!"

"I tell you, Barney, on my solemn oath," began the young man, in a voice that trembled with agitation; but before he could utter another word, a quick, sharp knocking at the door interrupted him, and seemed to startle the whole party. The two men looked inquiringly at each other for a moment. "Oh!" exclaimed the younger, who had been addressed as Bill, "'tis Gran, I suppose;" and walking forward, he admitted, after a moment's parley, an old, gray-haired woman, with a cloak thrown over her head. "An' where were you now, at this hour of the evening?" asked Barney, accompanying the inquiry with an oath.

"An' where was I, is that it? After them divils of goats there, that were wandhering off a good two mile and more from here; and near enough I was, bad luck to them! tumbling in the dark into the Wizard's Hole above there in the bog; and 'tis a night, glory be to God! that would shiver the heart out iv your body. But what's along here?" asked the old woman, suddenly. "What's the matter? Isn't this Ned Sweeney?"

"Matter enough!" returned Barney, gruffly. "He only wanted to get the rope round my neck and Bill's here; he was turnin' informer on our hands; but never you fear; we'll stop that work. Here, Bill, lend a hand, will you?" and the speaker strode across the room with some strong cord in his hand, that he had drawn from his pocket. The poor youth uttered a wild cry of terror that rung through the whole place, as the two men seized him.

"I tell you, Barney," he cried, imploringly, "I wasn't going to tell a mortal soul; all I wanted with Connors was to ask him about the rabbits down at the colonel's."

"Whisht your jabber, you thin-skinned varmint, you. Keep your breath to cool your porridge. I wouldn't believe ye, if ye kissed all the books in the barony. Ye'd have told that same foxy cub of a peeler of our tramp to-night, if I didn't stop your tongue. Them was the rabbits at the colonel's ye were after. Ha! you'll never see daylight again, plase Providence. Here, Bill, tie that knot tight, will yo."

I could see from the spot where I was sheltered, that after a brief and feeble struggle, their unfortunate victim had been bound hand and foot, and was then left sitting upon the log of timber before mentioned. I was at first so absorbed in interest at what I witnessed, as to be half unconscious of my own peril, but a terrible sense of it soon recurred. That I had most unfortunately fallen upon a party of desperate ruffians, there was no doubt, nor could I entertain a hope of escaping speedy death, if I were detected, and that might be expected every moment. A cold shudder crept through my whole frame as I realized the horrible position I was in. I was afraid, too, to stir, as an ungarded movement might so disturb the frail screen in front as at once to betray me; and the narrow passage between it and the wall scarcely afforded standing room. Bitterly did I curse the mad stupidity that led me into such danger; nor did many minutes elapse before a fresh accession of alarm was caused by the anticipation of instant discovery. Barney and Bill, as I had heard them named, after binding their prisoner, returned to the fire, where the old woman had remained, holding her long skinny hands over the blaze, and apparently not much interested, one way or the other, in the operations that were going on.



"I say," asked Bill, as he seated himself on a stool, "will you bring him before Captain Rock, and the rest of the boys to-morrow night, and have him tried reg'lar?"

"Faith, I'll do no such thing," replied the other; "I'll be judge, jury, and all myself. I caught him in the act, and that's enough. Death and no mercy to the spy and the informer—they're the laws among the Ribbon boys. Besides, I don't like a bone in the young ruffian's skin;" and the ruffian muttered something that I could not hear.

"May be," responded the other, in a low tone, "you may get into trouble."

"No fear, Bill, my boy. I dunno," he continued, "either, but it may be best to finish him at once. Faith, here goes." As he spoke, the man lifted a square stone somewhere near the hearth, and from a concealed receptacle he drew out what appeared to me, as well as I could see it, to be a large pistol; from the same opening he took the other appliances, and proceeded deliberately to load the weapon. The poor bound creature leaped up with a desperate effort as he noticed those fearful preparations, but fell back again, hopelessly upon the seat.

"Oh, for the love of God, Barney, don't murder me!" he cried in a hoarse, half-choking voice. "Speak to him, Nelly, speak to him!" he continued appealingly to the old woman. None of them took the least notice of his entreaties; the old woman merely shook her head, and continued gazing into the fire. I felt tingling from head to foot with horror at the prospect of witnessing this cold-blooded murder, and was inclined, on the first impulse, to rush out at all hazards, and interfere.

"I say, Barney," again exclaimed Bill, "why waste powder and shot on the likes of him; 'tisn't so much we have to spare. Tell you what we'll do: as we go down to meet the boys on the way to the colonel's to-night, pitch him into the Wizard's Hole, and, mind me, he'll not come up again to tell tales."

"You're right, Bill—the very thing," returned Barney, laying down his pistol. "I remember the last chap as we tucked into the soft sheets there; laws! what a splash he made as the black slush closed over him; it made me almost shiver."

A deep moan of agony, that broke from the wretched young man, told the effect that this fresh arrangement had upon him.

"There's a weight, a half-hundred, somewhere," said Barney; "where is it, Nell?"

"Oh, the old weight, is it? It's behind the sticks there, I believe. Do you want it?"

My heart leaped to my throat at this inquiry, for just at my foot, where I stood, I felt the hard substance, that I had supposed to be a stone. "Now for it!" I thought, as I listened in an agony to the next words.

"We'll just tie it round his waist, Bill; 'twill be a nice buckle for his belt, and will keep him down a while in the bottom of the hole."

"Shall I get it now?" asked the old hag.

"Time enough," responded the other, "when we set out. Get us the supper, though."

Some relief was afforded by this respite; but the faint hope which I had just begun to entertain, that I might possibly be able to avoid discovery until the men departed with their victim, and I had the old woman only to deal with, now vanished, as, when the weight came to be looked for, I was sure, of course, to be found, and as certain to be murdered. Some food was placed upon the small table drawn in front of the fire, while a candle fixed in a sconce against the wall added a feeble illumination to the firelight. The three partook of the meal in silence, and then the men smoked, during which an hour might have passed; scarcely a sound being heard save a low moan or restless movement from the poor lad, who was evidently writhing in agony from the physical torture of the tight cording of his limbs, as well as harassed, no doubt, with the horrible apprehension of his coming doom.

"Look out, Nell," were the first words spoken by Barney, that broke the stillness—"look out, and see what time of night it is."

The old woman rose, opened the door, and, judging by what external appearances I know not, in a few moments turned in again. "'Tis no more than eight o'clock," she said.

"Eight o'clock! Four or five hours yet, Bill. Let's have a sleep; we're not to meet at the cross till one. Do you sit up and watch, Nell," he continued; "and wake us up about twelve, mind."

In a few minutes the two miscreants had disposed themselves beside the fire, dragging over them some

loose garments supplied by Nelly; and in a very short time their deep, heavy breathing betokened that both were fast asleep. A turmoil of anxious thoughts literally seethed through my brain in the brief period of stillness that followed. Could I take advantage of their sleep? Could I take any step, and what, for my extrication from this dreadful peril? At length a low, parched voice, a kind of husky whisper it seemed, rose upon the quiet of the place. "Nelly, for the dear love of God, have pity on me, and save me, now that they are asleep."

There was no answer. "Who knows but she has dropped off, too," I thought.

"Nelly, if you hope for mercy yet, listen to me, save me," again whispered that weak voice of anguish.

"Whisht, will ye," replied the old woman, evidently quite awake. "It's no use your talking; you'd have sold Bill to the gallows; and if the liftin' of my little finger would save ye, I wouldn't."

"Give me a sup of wather, will ye?" he asked. "I think I'll go mad."

"I'll give you that much, at any rate," she said, "though it's enough of it you'll get afore long, I'm thinking."

The old hag rose and gave him some water from a tin vessel, but bitterly persisted in her refusal either to aid his escape, or even to loosen the cords that were so cruelly tormenting him. When Nelly replaced the water-can on the table she replenished the fire, settled the covering more carefully round the young man Bill, and then muttered, in a sort of soliloquy: "No fear but I'll wake in time; an hour at most will do me." She moved towards the old bed, eyeing the prisoner's bonds, as she passed him, to see that all was right there, and threw herself upon the rickety resting-place, that groaned and creaked beneath her weight, as she turned away from the light. Thank God, almost passed my lips in an audible utterance. For the first time I ventured to alter my position. I was so numbed and cramped that I could hardly stir. Soon the deep breath of the third sleeper was heard; the candle had been extinguished. The fire burned less brightly, yet shed a crimson glow through the whole apartment, showing me, as I gazed with less apprehension round the wood-work screen, the dusky figures and swarthy, frowning faces of the two sleeping men; while it illuminated with a fainter light the recumbent form of the doomed culprit, disclosing a ghastly face, stamped with an expression of the deepest anguish, with the eyes closed, but not in sleep, as a low, sighing moan that occasionally escaped from his lips but too plainly indicated.

#### CHAPTER III.

To take swift advantage of so unexpected a turn in the tide of danger was of course my foremost thought, and I was just about to glide out from my hiding-place, when I remembered that considerable caution was necessary with reference to the youth Sweeny, who, utterly unconscious of my being in the apartment, might in his surprise give expression to some sound that would arouse the sleepers and destroy us both. To release him from his bondage and peril I was, of course, as resolved on as to extricate myself. I crept out as gently as I could, and stood for a moment on the floor, to see if I could attract his notice. I was just by the bed where the old woman lay—a propinquity that I dreaded, as her softer breathing intimated a lighter sleep than seemed to have locked the two ruffians at the fire. Still the young man remained with closed eyes, and it was only as I was just beside him that he started with a bound, and glared upon me with a new terror in his face. I doubt not but that he thought, as I rose up before him so unexpectedly in that dusky light, that I was a spirit from the other world. "Hush!" I whispered, putting my lips to his ear—"not a word," pointing to the men. "I was over there; I know all about you; wait till I cut those cords." When with my penknife I had done so, he was some minutes before he could use his freed limbs. It required but few words to enjoin speed and caution. "Do you unbar the door," I again whispered; "and, for your life, take care of a sound." Slowly and softly we moved on. I possessed myself of the loaded pistol that lay close by one of the sleepers as I passed him. But our chief difficulty lay in getting the door opened. The iron bar that crossed it was fixed in a staple, and fitted it so tightly as to require considerable effort for its release, while the nervousness with which his whole frame shook made Sweeny but a clumsy hand.

"Let me try," I said at last in despair.

I had just succeeded in drawing out the bar, and with scarcely a sound, when my companion, in a horrified tone, cried, "For God's sake, hurry; I hear the old woman stirring."

I instantly pulled the bolt back more rapidly; and not aware of its weight, it fell with a dull, heavy clang on the earthen floor. I hardly now know what at that terrible moment we did. There was an instantaneous rustling movement from the bed; but we waited for nothing. All I can recollect is, that, quick as lightning, we were both out upon the heath. "I'll hold you; I don't know the way," I gasped, as I dreaded that my companion might think only of himself, and desert me. I am sure that he never dreamed of doing so. He seized me tightly by the arm, and on we went headlong, plunging through swamps, and more than once falling over some unseen impediment. The night was very dark, and I trusted entirely to my guide. Want of breath at last compelled us to halt, and we stood panting for a moment. Not a sound of any kind reached us. If pursued at first, our foes must have been at fault, as we heard nothing of them.

"Tell me what was to be done to-night at the colonel's!" I asked Sweeny.

"Fire and murder," was his expressive answer.

"Come on there at once—you know the way," I said, "will you?"

"Yes;" and without another word, diverging a little from the course we had been pursuing, we again hurried forward with fresh speed. We soon reached the termination of the bog, crossed a road, and got into some fields.

"Over here," whispered Sweeny, "is the colonel's. Colonel Grey," he added, in reply to an inquiry. "What are you going to do there?"

"To warn them—to save them, to be sure," I answered. "And never fear," I continued, as I noticed some reluctance on the part of the lad; "I saved you already, and I'll take care of you still: no harm shall come to you."

We continued our course through two or three fields, and turned out on what appeared to me to be a narrow by-road, when suddenly, as if from the ditch close to us, a deep, hoarse voice gave a challenge: "Who goes there?"

"May I never!" ejaculated Sweeny, in a trembling whisper; "if 'tisn't the boys; they're waitin' here for the rest to go up to the colonel's."

"Answer them boldly," I whispered.

Sweeny replied to the challenge, when a rapid cross-questioning ensued, and some passwords were demanded and given.

"Who's with you?" asked the speaker who challenged us, now standing out on the road, and who seemed to be the leader of the party who were still concealed in the ditch.

A momentary hesitation nearly proved fatal to us.

"Oh!" he answered, and his voice shook, "'tis Bill, sure. We are to go on, Barney said, and see all's right, and give you the signal."

"You had better stay here," gruffly responded the speaker. "Go on, indeed! What signal?"

"Just a whistle, and no more; I must be ruled by Barney, as he's the leader to-night," replied Sweeny, with an affectation of sulkiness in his tone that showed more presence of mind than I had hoped for.

"Well, on with you, then; and if you spoil all, it isn't my doing." And, to my infinite relief, the speaker sank again into the shelter from which he had emerged.

We passed leisurely forward beside the lurking party, afraid to go fast, lest suspicion should be aroused; but we had not advanced a dozen paces, when the hard, heavy tramp of feet, running at full speed upon the road, distinctly reached our ears; and, from the stir among the ambushed men, was evidently heard by them, too.

"On, on, for our very lives!" exclaimed Sweeny. "Come this way—quick; and he plunged in among some thick plantations, through which it was no easy task in the darkness to advance. We caught, as we forced our way through, voices loud and furious behind us, and the single terrible expression: "Hell's fire, man, be after them!" discovered to us at once the danger we had to apprehend.

"This way, this way!" cried Sweeny, dragging me forward; "we may do them yet."

In two or three minutes we reached a small wooden door in a wall, with which my companion seemed acquainted. He opened it quickly; and then, when we passed through, bolted it on the other side. It admitted us into what looked like the extensive back-premises of



a spacious mansion, that rose up dark and gloomy on our left. Sweeny strode rapidly on to where a single light was burning in a small window, low, near the ground. At this he gave two peculiar taps. At once the light moved.

"The moment he opens the door," whispered Sweeny—"that he's coming now to do—you manage him with that," pointing to the pistol I had. "'Tis Griffin, the butler, I mean; he's in the plot; and then you can alarm the house; and there's not a moment to be lost."

Most cautiously an old, gray-haired servant opened the door at which we had stationed ourselves.

"Is it all right, Barney?" asked a low voice.

"Yes, to be sure," exclaimed Sweeny, pushing in as I followed; and instantly shutting the door again behind us, he seized the candle from the man's hand, while, with the butt end of the pistol, I dealt the treacherous servant a blow that effectually hindered his interfering.

"Go up the stairs there now," cried Sweeny, "and wake them up; I'll stay here."

I dashed on with my pistol, and narrowly escaped being shot down myself, as a close to my adventure, by a half-dressed gentleman, who confronted me on the lobby.

"Stop!" I cried, "till I explain. Your house is just about to be attacked; I am here to warn you."

A few words put him in possession of all that was necessary then to inform him. A night of alarm and confusion followed within the building; but, to our surprise, no attempt from without was made; why, we could not tell. My strange first acquaintance with Colonel Grey led to a close intimacy—though not in Tipperary, as he soon after left the county—resulting in what in no way concerns this present narrative. The poor lad Sweeny was well provided for, and sent abroad; and, for myself, I only add that I never had reason to regret the mistake that led to such unexpected consequences.

### THE AGE OF INNOCENCE.

To the melodious and unmitigated Mr. Tupper we are indebted for the damp idea that a baby is a well-spring of pleasure in a house, and as Mr. Tupper possesses eminent intellectual qualifications for the authentic treatment of childish themes, there can be little hesitation about accepting his dictum as decisive. Bachelors and spinsters of acrid temperament may be sceptical at times as to the actual ingenuousness of babes; single persons of embittered natures may be disposed to question the superiority to criticism of that standard of unearthly beauty which all babies are known to surpass; yet the notorious fact remains, that a sheep is a mere tyro in innocence when compared with the most artful of infants, and moss rosebuds sink into discouraging ugliness beside Mr. Tupper's well-spring of pleasure. In full cognizance of these things, divers poets have endeavoured to serve up infancy in rhymes adequate to its merits, and Wordsworth is especially famed for having come nearest to perfection in that line. It remained for some later darling of the muses to delicately unite the practical with the poetical on such a theme, and every young mother who reads this will be grateful for the space devoted to verses exactly aimed at her maternal heart. The author of said verses has never given his name to the public, and the fact that his productions have hitherto been perused only by the privileged few who take an interest in out-of-the-way literature, renders present quotations from them quite as fresh reading as a majority of newspaper originalities.

First, then, we have a finely-expressed instance of what a spirited infant will do sometimes:

"Billy Boloon jumped out of his bed,  
He rushed at his sister and cut off her head;  
This gave his dear mother a great deal of pain.  
Let us hope little Billy won't do so again."

Nothing could be more gently touching than the reference to the mother's sensation of pain at her child's hasty act; and how full of a fond mother's forgiving spirit is that last line.

It is well known that when two infants are left alone together, the elder, in an exuberance of innocence, is apt to impose upon the younger:

"Baby sat in the window-seat,  
Mary pushed her into the street,  
Baby's brains were dashed out in the air,  
And mamma held up her forefinger at Mary."

Here we have a familiar picture of maternal sternness in its first exercise. The poet makes us fairly see

the admonitory forefinger, so peremptory and yet so kind.

A mother appeals to her darling's moral sensibility.

"Where's your sister, Margaret tell?"

"Mother, I pushed her into the well!"

"Very cross in you, Margaret, really,  
I thought you loved your sister dearly."

How much more sensible is a gentle reproof like that, than the brutal punishment called slap. Always appeal to your child's heart first, before going to—extremities.

In a fourth stanza we have that terror of all good children, the petulant, scolding grandfather:

"Grandpa had gold in his brass-nailed trunk;  
Grandpa gave Harry some; Harry got drunk.  
Then, to get more, the trunk Harry broke into;  
Grandpa thought Harry ought to be spoken to."

Oh, of course! babes should be as prim and still as mutes at a funeral.

This next verse is hardly natural; it makes a doting mother guilty of something like sarcasm; but it may be only playful, after all:—

"Darling sticks carving-knives into poor James—  
Darling calls grandmamma horrible names;  
Darling can't have any dessert—that's clear—  
Unless she screams loud when there's company here."

What a familiar touch is that—"into poor James." Such is an innocent young child's sweetness of heart, that, if the little one is sticking a carving-knife into your body, you have only to say something softly reproachful about "poor me," and the child will instantly desist—especially if you take away the carving-knife.

Now rises a familiar picture of Man in the parental office:—

"Sammy got hold of a match one day,  
And set on fire a stack of hay;  
Soon hay, barn, and house were ashes and dust,  
And Sammy's papa turned away in disgust."

Would a Mother "turn away in disgust" from her own child, for a single fault? No! she would cling to him still!

And, now, observe how the immortal maternal instinct takes alarm at the most trifling change in a babe's diet:—

"Oh, look, if you please, Master Jonathan, mam,  
He's bitten a piece right out of my arm!"  
"Oh, dear!" cried the mother, in accents wild,  
"I hope it won't disagree with the child."

But of a still higher order of motherhood than that, even, is the judicious female parent who rewards her little pet's out-spoken spirit of Truth with words of encouragement:—

"Who strangled Jack with his collar and chain?"  
"I did, mamma, and I'll do it again;—  
And I'll strangle you when I get big and strong!"  
"That's a good boy, to confess when you're wrong."

Additional graces of poetry are not needed to make us all appreciate the tender charms of earliest childhood; nor would a whole volume soften the hearts of such exceptional parents as are cynically accustomed to touching-up their offspring with a slipper. Infancy is the purifying and soothing solace of a house; the joy of a neighbourhood;—especially if it has a habit of beating a drum.

### THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING.

I.  
Gladsome was the monarch's daughter  
On the day she wed,  
And a bridal wreath they brought her  
For her stately head;  
Gold and gems from many a far land  
Gave they her to wear;  
None of these could match the garland  
Round her golden hair.  
Knew she not how every blossom  
From a grave had chanced to spring:  
Death above her brow and bosom  
Crowned the daughter of the king.

Calmly died the monarch's daughter  
When the years had sped,  
And a chaplet wreath they brought her  
For her lowly head.  
Robes and spice from many a far land  
For her lying there;  
None of these could match the garland  
Round her silver hair.  
All the valleys lent a blossom  
For the daughter of the king:  
Flowers o'er her brow and bosom  
Breathed of life and endless spring.

### HAND AND GLOVE.

#### A CITY NOVELLET.

BY E. H. F. DU TERREAUX.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

##### THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Marriages, according to the proverb, are made in heaven: the proverb might have wisely provided for those marriages, by no means unknown to you and me, which are made in bank parlours. Not literally arranged there, it is true; but a consideration of bank deposits has as much and more to do with that promise to love, honour and cherish than any other consideration of things in heaven and earth. How runs the service according to Mammon? "I, Sixty-thousand Pounds, take thee, Forty-thousand, to my wedded investment: to have and to hold from this day forth; for better for worse, for richer for poorer, through discounts and premiums till Divorce us do part, and hereto I sign thee thy settlements." N. and M. in the rubric are algebraic terms which represent certain sums vested; marriage is the equation by which they are worked out; and the result? The result is not infrequently happiness with the minus sign, wrought by workers in Mammon's mathematics.

Now the uncertainty of the course of true love ever to prove smooth except when rolled with a golden roller has its advantages. It gives rise to innumerable poems and plays and stories every day: it furnishes people with something to think about, something to fret over, if they are in love: it makes them set about getting the golden roller if they want their true love a level lawn. Papas are quite right to object to the love which, content with a cottage, has not always the means to pay the rent for the cottage. With due regard to another proverbial aphorism on love, concerning poverty and doors and windows, Papas are quite right again. I wonder whether the maiden who married the Lord of Burleigh had a papa living? I am inclined to think not; for he would have objected. "I can make no marriage present, Little can I give my wife, Love will make our cottage pleasant, And I love thee more than life," is all very well; but the good father might reasonably have objected, not knowing his customer. The poet sets us right, though, on the question of the father's existence, by stating "they left her father's roof." The father was alive then; but perhaps he was out. I am disposed to hug the conviction that he would have interposed obstacles to that cottage-and-nothing arrangement, if he had known of his daughter's attachment. He would only have followed the principles of papas in general, if he had.

The converse too holds good. If a husband possessing that romantic six-pounder whose locksmith is Poverty and whose glazier is Love seems ineligible, a suitor who presents himself with a mansion of ample proportions through the door of which Poverty's entrance never necessitates the departure of Love by another means of egress, becomes quite a different matter. Then it is that the bank parlour comes into operation, and the match is made. Heaven may have a share in the manufacture or not, as Heaven pleases. The services of Heaven will probably be called into requisition (in conjunction with a couple of carriages, a bishop and the beadle) when certain little formalities announce to the fashionable world that these twain are one flesh. Then Heaven is again made use of, what time a paternal blessing from the doorstep edifies an admiring public congregated about the area. Heaven blesses them and they are off, having received the benediction of the Church to supplement that blessing found, brethren, in the gospel according to St. Plutus.

Now poor Lucy thought a good deal—not perhaps in this wise, but of kindred matters, while she lay awake and wondered. Of all wretched times for the indulgence of an anxious mind, commend me to a summer night. The day is nothing as a time for worrit, unless you happen to be in the country during wet weather or in church during a more than usually feeble sermon. At such times a predisposition to anxiety certainly becomes intolerable: otherwise the day is merciful, even to grief. But it is a different thing in bed, when hour by hour the night gets hotter and the pillow more indented and the bed crumpler and the clothes worse askew. At the hour when otherwise placid articles of furniture exhibit a strange tendency to crack, (wardrobes are more diabolically inclined than any other inanimate substance known, except perhaps cisterns); when the clothes you wore during the day



insist on arranging themselves spectrally, and vary the proceeding sometimes by sliding off chairs with a *whoosh!* to the ground; when the mice behind the wainscoting are gifted with vocal powers utterly out of proportion with their size, and become so many rodent flageolets; when an awkward pause in the mural concert is filled up with a sudden and awful creak in the floor unlike any creak that *could* happen from any known cause; when the human brain manifests a lively tendency to cast up the most intricate sum propounded in the vain hope of tiring it, and cheerfully offers to remember all sorts of old tunes and old bits of poetry, and to recall whole chapters of books and to create elaborate chains of argument, and to be as disagreeably brilliant as it possibly can; at these times an ordinarily uncomfortable state of mind is bad enough, but an engrossing care suradded thereto becomes a torment. And thus Lucy suffered, tossing and trembling on an inflamed pillow, and worrying herself with her father's words.

What could he mean? What in the name of every earthly consideration could induce him to see in that clerk of his a fit suitor for his daughter's hand? The man was vulgar, was repulsive, was mean, had no position, had not even the hope of being rich, had not (to all appearance) the talent or the breeding which could make him so. There was not even a worldly excuse for proposing the match, far less a moral excuse. He was a hound and nothing more. Lucy loved her father, and could not trust herself to having heard him aright. She would speak to him to-morrow morning and demand his meaning, and then—why then she would frame her action according to what he said; but accept the man Wire she neither could nor would.

With this resolution she fell asleep about morning, and as sleep is no respecter of resolutions, she slumbered on, a Sleeping Beauty of the nineteenth century until far on in the day, and awoke long after Mr. Throgmorton had transgressed the course of the sun and gone eastward, a shining light in the City.

Now commerce had its difficulties to encounter as well as true love, and Mr. Throgmorton found one or two sharp thorns in that easy chair of his before his desk. Resolved to probe the sore occasioned by the largest thorn with a view to extract it if possible, he rang the bell and demanded the presence of his managing clerk.

Mr. Wire entered the room of his chief, with a swagger of indifference. The man's nature was one of low cunning and no more. Had he possessed proportionate cleverness, he would not have prejudiced the influence he exerted over his employer by blustering in the presence of others.

His chief motioned him to an arm chair, which stood on the other side of his office desk. With an exaggerated assumption of ease Wire threw himself into it, and flinging his leg over one of the arms, waited for Throgmorton's word.

"I want to talk with you, Wire," began his employer, "in reference to a proposal you made me last night." His outer-man was calm in saying this, his brow unruffled, his coat shiny, his hair as glossily white as ever. Only one who knew Mr. Throgmorton for the false hypocrite he was could have seen a strong undercurrent of anxiety—nay of fear—in the undisturbed shininess of his face.

"You made me a proposal, Wire—a—Mr. Wire—last night, that I should admit you as partner in the business, giving you a third of the receipt of the house and including in this gratuity the hand of my daughter."

"With a view of consolidating the bond of friendly feeling between us. Yes," the other answered.

"It has not been sufficient," Mr. Throgmorton went on with the merest frown, "that out of the lowest depth of wretchedness I, like a Good Samaritan, raised you. That into the wounds made by poverty, disease, and crime I poured the healing oil of competence. That even my pockets have been drained of that hospitable twopence which has gone to provide for your necessities. Not," added Mr. Throgmorton, looking round with the smile of a Commentator who had got over a tremendous scriptural difficulty, "not that the Twopence of the parable and of my metaphor represents an equivalent sum of the present currency; for many twopences have gone to you, Wire, many twopences have gone to you."

Mr. Wire laughed boisterously, and swung his leg.

"Ah," he returned, "and how many twopences have I brought in for you, Good Samaritan?"

Mr. Throgmorton shook his head mournfully.

"Come now," exclaimed Wire, "we've heard your

version of the parable, which is the version given by most parsons: let's now hear my version. It begins in the regular way, with the certain man who went down to Jericho and fell among thieves; and the Levite, he passes by, and the neighbours they all pass by, just the same, and presently on comes the Good Samaritan. Ah. But your version doesn't go on to say how the Good Samaritan himself belonged to that gang near Jericho, who had robbed the certain man, and how, being recognised by the wounded party, the Good Samaritan stood the oil and wine to keep everything sweet and quiet between 'em. It doesn't mention that the twopence was hush-money, does it, Good Samaritan?"

Mr. Throgmorton grew slightly red.

"No; nor it doesn't say how when the certain man recovered, his services was more than equivalent for the miserable coin laid out on him, which was to keep the old thief's neck out of the halter—eh, Good Samaritan?"

Mr. Throgmorton grew holily indignant.

"When you have completed your blasphemous parody," he said, "you will allow me to add my comment."

"Oh, comment away, Good Samaritan," retorted Wire.

"I decline your services, Mr. Wire, and your recompense for the future; and I do not feel called on to reward your past assistance by offering you the terms you demand."

"Oh, indeed!" replied the other, "so you won't admit me into partnership, won't you?"

"No, certainly not."

"And won't confer on me the hand of Miss Lucy Throgmorton?"

"Emphatically, no!"

With his yellowest smile, Wire whispered, "You know the consequences of refusing?"

"I do," the old man answered, "and have taken my precautions against any exposure which you can make of my transaction in the matter of the Agra Castle. I can afford to dare you, Mr. Wire."

Rising and bending over him, Wire hissed, "But there are other matters than the Agra Castle, which will not so easily bear exposure. Do you think I'd be content to stand upon that? Fudge, my Good Samaritan! I've not been in your office these months for nothing. I've found out many things since I've been here. I've found out this among other things:—that that business of insuring the vessel after you knew she was safe was only the commencement of a long path, which has gone straight downhill ever since. The temptation of successful swindling has been too great for you, your respectable old rogue; you have gone steadily on in it ever since, and have improved, month by month. Those books of yours, which you keep so sacred in yonder safe, tell one tale, don't they? and a flattering tale too. The books I have kept ever since I've been here would show a different story. Call in assistance; have me turned out; send for a magistrate; let the whole thing go before the light of day,—and then, my fine friend, where are you?"

Altogether abashed and confounded was that good old man, when his enemy stood relentlessly over him.

"And now," continued Wire, "I'll trouble you for an answer to my demands. Is it to be partnership in the profits as well as the accounts; and is it, with the view of consolidating the bond of friendly feeling, to be an alliance through the medium of your fair and humble daughter?"

(To be continued.)

### MY BROTHER TOM.

There was a thought of naming him Isaac. At least that was my mother's thought when Tom was born, for he was the child of her old age. But my father would not listen to it; and although my mother did think of making a practical use of the sentence in the baptismal service, "Name the child," by popping Isaac into the clergyman's ear, and before my father could recover from his astonishment completing the Hebraism, she did not venture on it. So he was christened Thomas.

There were before him six of us, myself the eldest—Miss Price by courtesy, and of the same name still, for no one has thought of changing my patronymic. I am now aged—But no matter; while there is life there is hope, and I can boast the experience of four married women and one man. I will not anticipate, but begin at the beginning. It is of Tom that I am to speak, and not of myself; and if my own story comes out incidentally, I hope to be acquitted of egotism. Sure I am, that I

have been so Thomased all my life that I am not quite sure of my identity.

When Tom was born, there was great rejoicing. For a short time there was also great contention; for my four youngest sisters and I clamoured which should hold the baby. Mother settled the dispute, and to my infinite complacency said, "Let Patience have him, she is the eldest." Short-sighted child that I was, I was delighted at this decision. I am older and wiser now. With what importance did I then assert my right and prerogative! Nobody could hold the baby but mother and I. The young tyrant soon learned to tolerate no one else, and he grew to us like a fixture. To his mother he clung from necessity; to me for recreation. He crowed and shouted with delight at my appearance, and gave his first token of appreciativeness by putting out his arms to me. I was in ecstasy. It was delight—triumph; and in the first magnificent feeling of womanly consequence, I twisted up my hair and put in a comb.

"Bless me!" cried my father, "how like an old woman cut short!"

"Indeed!" said my mother, "Patience is quite a woman, and I should not know what to do without her."

"Humph!" said my father. But his eye caught the reflection of a grey hair or two in the mirror, opposite, and he said no more—if saying "humph" be saying anything. And I inwardly resolved that the tucks in my present frocks should be "let out," if the baby ever gave me an opportunity, and that the next should be of greater longitude. Why not? It is wonderful how, in some respects, brother Tom brought me forward; and, in others, how he has kept me back—perhaps that is only compensatory justice.

My father died when Tom was four years old. Poor little Tom! he was very fond of him, and shewed a knowledge quite beyond his years in his lamentations. Mother was inconsolable and helpless, and Tom was fastened on me more closely than ever. I was only sixteen, but seemed a woman grown, so much had household cares and duties brought me forward. I was the admiration of all our friends, and was pointed at as the model-daughter. Such indeed I was; but, if there had been less model in me, my mother would have more wisely shaped herself, and my sisters would not have been quite so useless. I tried to direct them. They rebelled. I appealed to my mother, and she said, "You are a dear good girl, Patience, and it is easier for you to do all than to ask them." They felt the rebuke and I the praise; and, while they tried to do more, I strove to anticipate them. So at eighteen I was house-keeper in fact, and my mother only my police force, in last resort, to quell rebellions. It was all on account of my brother Tom, for he had placed me in my dangerous elevation.

As Tom grew to boyhood, he became the apple of my eye and the pride of my life. No lad in the neighbourhood was better dressed. While my sisters slept, and my mother dozed and wondered, my frocks scarce worn, were transformed into fancy costumes for little Tom. Oftentimes I scripped a pattern, or bought just a little more, to fit him out in a jacket or sack of brilliant colours. I was delighted when the little rogue said, "all Patty's frocks made of a bit of mine!" That idea grew with him. He thought—bless the man, he thinks now—that I and mine, soul, body, and wardrobe, are a part of him and his! This is true—with a difference. The boy's egotism and selfishness have merely reversed the fact. He is a type of his sex—begging the gentlemen's pardon—perhaps a little exaggerated, but not much. Such selfish and arrogant, self-sufficient and presuming—but I must be cool.

Young friends began to cluster about the house. There were five Miss Prices, and it would have been misprison of treason against Cupid if no man called on them. Young lady friends of my sisters brought their brothers, then the brothers came of themselves, then their friends came with them. In our bloom we were quite the fashion. We were pretty and well-bred, accomplished, and not very poor. In a word, we were respectable. And my eldest brother, William, he had his friends too. So, on the whole, in our set we were quite the fashion.

We! I had forgotten. *They*, I should say—for where was I? Overshadowed by Tom—brother Tom—dear brother Tom! At eight years of age he could not go to sleep unless some one sat up in his room. Sisters had company. The housemaid, like all housemaids, was *always* out. Mother was busy. "Couldn't I just sit in this room and draw up this day's rents, or sew a button on to-morrow's trowsers?" I could just do nothing else. The company was always sisters'. And



Tom waked up and cried so. It was croup, or ear-ache, or cholera, or cholera-morbus, or terror, or—no matter what, Sister Patience was the catholicon, the panacea—the anodyne. The others always asked, "How can you hear him cry so?" It was as if I alone had the key of his vocal organs, and the charge of grand pacificator. Our guests must not hear his noise; but nobody thought of any one's quelling the riot, except Patience. All fell on poor me! And this was in part the reversion of my mother's praise—"Patience is the eldest. Patience is quite a woman." I submitted, and looked forward to the day—which I then trusted would come some time—that Tom would wipe his nasal promontory. It was a sort of dream life; but I had hope.

I waked from my dream to hear that sister Carry was to be married! She was the next oldest, and had fairly, or rather unfairly, stolen my turn. Thomas—dear brother Tom—consoled me. "You won't go and get married, and go away to leave us, will you, sister Patty?" And mother, with a sigh, said, "No, Tommy, sister Patty is such a good daughter—we could not live without her." There was half a tear in mother's eye, and a whole one in my own. It was not that I wanted to be married. Oh no! But any other servant who had been so long in the family would have been trusted with the secret before quite all the arrangements were determined on. However, I had some solace, Caroline grew affectionate. There were worlds to do, and sister Patience—dear sister Patty—was quite in request. She helped to get up various dresses, and even Tom was a little taken off her hands. I must say, however, that they neglected him. His hair was not half combed, and his jacket got all out at elbows; and, to crown all, they made him sick with cake, and I held him on my knees in the nursery, while my sister Caroline promised to love, honour, and obey, in the church. They were all so sorry! "But then," they said, "nobody could take care of Tom but sister, and they were afraid he would be sick." Why didn't they prevent it?

I need not dwell on collateral matters. All were married, brother Will bringing up the rear—all, I mean, except Tom. He grew up to a fine lad, and sister Patty became more obsolete than ever—obsolete except in cases of croup, the convulsions, christenings, fittings out for the country and seaside, and the other demands of a baker's dozen of aunts and cousins. In the ailments of all their mothers, sister Patience is invaluable. But these things are not my theme. I only mention them in illustration of my boast, before spoken, that I have the experience of four married women, and one married man.

Now came Tom's youth, and now came my hardest trials. Four young married sisters and a brother kept open house for him. Sister Patience dropped in upon them with her mother in a sociable way. Brother Tom was the Mercury for each. He sang at their young parties, and turned over the pages for musical misses. Sister Patience was never asked, for they "knew she would not come." How they knew without asking is a mystery to my powers of divination. Sister Patience never would get married—for who would take care of Tom? Mother could "visit round," or keep house very comfortably alone—but poor Tom! They were horrified on his account, mother and all. And sister "was really getting old; she never liked society, and she could not begin now."

Heigh-ho! I found I had raised a brother for my sisters. I was always his favourite—when he was sick I was his dear sister—when there was a vest to embroider. I was his angel—on slippers and watch-cases; his divinity—when he needed a new dozen of shirts. But the others found him such a delightful stop-gap when their husbands were morose or busy, and would not go out; so useful in summer picnics and winter parties and sleigh rides; so capital a hand to fight up to the box-office for tickets, that mother and poor I had no knowledge of him except to keep his wardrobe in order. And that all fell on me. Mother declared that Patience always was such an assistance to her! And to think that Tom has the assurance to offer me a shilling's worth of entertainments at some wandering lecturer's levee every winter, and, because I don't accept such fourpenny-bit civility, goes away and declares that he would gladly wait on me out, but I prefer to be at home with mother! "She is so good and daughter-like!" Was there ever such kind appreciation?

I cannot understand where the man spends all his evenings. I know that a portion of them are spent at his sister's; but where does he wind up? He is always out till eleven o'clock, and often till midnight. His

clothing, his hair, his very imperial smell dreadfully of cigars. And yet he is a great invalid, my brother Tom. He never has any appetite in the mornings, except when I can manage to get up something uncommonly tempting for him. He frequently begs me so pently to bring him a cup of coffee to his bedside—that I cannot refuse. I rebel inwardly; but when I see his face—Tom is handsome—and when he "dear sisters" me, what can I do? I am so afraid he will get married, and his wife will not take half care of him. He is fragile and delicate! Several times he has attempted business, but is always driven back by indisposition. Indeed, the very thought seems to throw him into a fever.

My mother is as anxious as I am. She says Tom is the stay of the house, now that the others are all gone. (I am only a parenthesis, and can be dropped out.) Indeed, he does furnish us with occupation—mother with sighs, and wonders, and ejaculations; and me with labour, from morn till dewy eve, and so on till midnight. Something is always to be said, or feared, or hoped for Tom. That is mother's province. I have her to cheer, and Tom to labour for. I could wish that he were a thought more grateful and considerate; but mother says that all men are like him, and that they feel more than they express. Indeed, it is to be hoped they do.

There is an end to patience, and I fear sometimes Tom will make an end of me. He cannot pack his trunk. He cannot even hang up his coat. He does not so much as put away his tonsorial apparatus. He drops his garments and pocket furniture, his books, papers, pencils—everything but his loose change—all over the house, and for whatever he wants raises a hue and cry for his dinner like Giant Grim for his supper. He borrows all the money I have, and anticipates mother's semi-annual dividend. He dines out on a sovereign, wines and cigars included, and mother economizes half-a-crown on her marketing, and treats herself to a "tea-dinner." All his shirts must be made in the house, and my eyes ache over the fine stitches. Mother says that the money it would cost a pair to make them fit for Tom's wear is an item in housekeeping, and must be saved. That is true, and I submit. But I overheard him say the other day to a friend, who sometimes calls to take him out, when he might chance to stay at home, that if he (the friend) could find cigars fit to smoke for fifteen pounds a thousand, "it was an object." He (brother Tom) could not find any under eighteen pounds. And I am sure he smokes a thousand in a week—I mean a month. Or suppose it three—are not sixty pounds a year a pretty item to burn up? says mamma. And must we eat cold mutton and hash to his ragouts and pates, and turn the carpets, and renovate the beds, and alter the curtains, and buy our frocks off the same piece, that my skirt may make her a new body, and vice versa, that he may figure in Regent Street, and quarrel about the Norma of Grisi and Cruvelli? Must I make fifty shirts to find him in smoke for a quarter? Must we do the shabby genteel to keep him in oyster suppers, and not save enough in a year to give him extras for a month—and after all he be "ashamed of our appearance?" O Tom, dear brother Tom—dear with a money mark, which is worse than dear with a vengeance! And yet I love the fellow!

It is wonderful the troops of friends he has, and the hopes he entertains from them. He is quite a Mæcenas in a small way; a patron of the fine arts. His portrait is extant in as many forms as a popular minister's—all present; first attempts of aspiring genius, presented with compliments, but costing each, in the long run, more than a miniature by Ross. He is always "forced by position" to take boxes at benefits and figures in complimentary committees. Such very neat presents as he received from various people! And so many, many times he has been groomsman. The brides all say he has such a delicate taste in his presents on such occasions! My bonnet has been altered the third time after the invaluable fashion plates of *La Follet*—and by my own fingers! I did intend to put new material in the last time, but dear brother Tom had a wedding tour to make. He did not want to go, and he told me so, when he borrowed my last sovereign, and mother's too. "Dear Patty," he said, "I wish I was out of it. My friend offers to pay all expenses; but that would be small in me to accept, you know." So off he went. I did keep back a reserve fund of which he knew nothing; but a tailor's bill came in of his while he was gone, and swept the last corner of my porte-monnaie. I did not want mother to hear it, so paid it, and said nothing.

People say it is all our own fault—mother's and mine; that we have spoiled him; but his younger sisters and their set need not make him such extravagant Christmas

and New Year's presents; they know he will not be undone, though his mother and I go naked for it. If he is spoiled, how is he to be unspoiled?—that's what I should like to know; and what am I to do? Do tell me, dear Editor, for in a few months, or more years, I shall be a ruined spinster. He has even now begun his approaches to induce mother to mortgage the house, which she holds in her own right, that he may "go into business." Business, indeed, it will be! I shall have to take up his notes for him, for anything harder to draw than an an Havana cigar will certainly make him hopelessly sick. He would be thrown entirely on his back by the danger of a protest, and go to his room in hard times, never to emerge till money was easy.

P.S. Tom is to be married!

I have just learned it, confidentially from mother. And he was actually, the ingrate, serves me as all the rest did. And they have combined to entertain mother at a round of visits among them; and the house, the old family mansion, is to be mortgaged, to refurnish the parlours; and my room is to be taken for the bridal chamber; for Tom, dear brother Tom, says it is the best in the house. And I am already looked to for various exertions and preparations. Tom says he will give me a home as long as he lives. Will he, indeed! And am I to be Aunt Pattied quiet into my grave by a troop of new comers? Am I to hold the babies while my sister receives her guests? Am I to take care of Tom's wardrobe while he and his bride are spending evenings out? Oh, Tom, dear brother Tom!

Shall I submit? What else can I do?

Second P.S. I am to be married.

A widower, with ten children, has proposed, and I have accepted him. That is about the number I should have been entitled to if I had been married at the proper time, instead of being brother Thomased into a nonentity. I would not accept my man if he had one child less, for ten is the very least number that will give me a title to stay at home and mind my own business. The care of my six sisters and brothers' families threatens to be much too onerous; and since Tom turns me out of my own house—fairly and properly mine—and then coolly offers me, with great condescension, a part of my own, "as long as I live," it is high time I sought a more permanent establishment.

Thomas is highly indignant. Even the Irish girl in the kitchen declares against my marrying a "widow man." My mother begs me, on account of "poor Tom," to think better of it. Poor Tom, indeed! Where is poor Patience? If the boy will get married, his wife may take care of him, and I wish her joy of it.

Here ends the confessions of a maiden sister; for, before this appears in print, Miss Price will be no more. I ought, perhaps, to go back and correct the doubts at the beginning of my confessions—but, no matter. I might harmonise some apparent incongruities—but they are no matter either. The thing as it stands is a sort of diary, which Miss Price leaves as a legacy to the mothers of our land, to warn them against patting and wheedling girls of domestic inclinations into old-maid nurses of brother Toms. Let the boy-creatures take care of themselves!

But then—after all—I do hope—when my son is born, that his ten elder sisters and brothers will be kind to him!

#### A LION FIGHT.

Some few years ago, business led me to Lucknow, and I carried a letter of introduction to our Resident Minister, who received me with great cordiality.

"I suppose," he said, in the course of conversation, "you would like to see the curiosities of the place?"

"It would afford me much pleasure," I answered.

"Well, then, among other things, you must visit the palace, see the King of Oude, get permission to go though his menagerie, and perhaps, if you are fortunate enough to please his Majesty, he may honour you with an exhibition of some beast fight."

"Nothing would please me better, your Excellency."

"I will do what I can for you then, major; but much will depend on yourself; for though I have the right and power to present you at court, it must be as the King wills about the rest. I must tell you, to begin with, that I am not in special favour with his Majesty; he fears rather than likes me; he naturally views me in the light of a restraint; he governs his subjects, and I in a measure govern him. He cannot altogether do as he pleases, because English law bears upon him through my office; and exactly in that degree is the



incumbent of that office distasteful to him. He professes, however, to like Englishmen; in fact, the principal officers of his Majesty's household are British subjects. He is very eccentric, and loves with great warmth and hates with great bitterness, and just as the whim takes him will be your success or failure."

He then made me acquainted with the court etiquette of India, and appointed a day for the presentation. Among other things, I was to make the King a present in gold, say five or ten mohurs, as a mere matter of form. These were to be placed on a fine linen handkerchief, the handkerchief laid on the palm of my right hand, and the right hand laid in the palm of my left hand, and in this manner I was to hold them forth to His Majesty. Should he bow stiffly, without touching them, I was to hope for nothing more; but should he approach, smile, place his left hand under mine, and touch the gold pieces with his right, then I was to consider myself in high favour.

Of course I waited the eventful moment with a good deal of curiosity, and am happy to say I met with all the success I hoped for. In the language of a courtier, His Majesty was graciously pleased to notice me in a kindly manner; and seeing this, my new friend, the Resident, hinted that I was a hunter of some reputation and a zoologist of some fame.

"Indeed!" returned his Majesty, who spoke English almost as well as his native tongue; then he must visit my menagerie."

"He will be delighted," was the answer.

"Perhaps he would like to witness a fight?"

"Your Majesty could not give him a greater pleasure."

"Then he shall be gratified," said the Indian monarch. "Let me see—this is Friday—say Tuesday next. I have two famous lions—he shall see them in combat—a rare sight. It will take three days to prepare them, for they must be rendered furious by being deprived of food and water. So be it—on Tuesday next, your Excellency. Meantime, he must be shown over my palace and gardens, park and menagerie, and your Excellency must bring him round to dine with me."

Nussir-u-deen (the son and successor of Ghazi-u-deen), at this time King of Oude, a portion of Northern Hindoostan, was a straight, tall, slender, swarthy man, in the very prime and vigour of life, with regular, almost handsome features, and jet black eyes and hair. The general expression of his countenance, when in good humour, was pleasing and prepossessing—though there were certain lines that betokened strong, selfish passions, craftiness, even treachery; but these, when the possessor was not excited, or roused to anger, would be likely to escape the notice of any one except a close observer and an experienced physiognomist. His income was enormous; and besides this, his economical father had hoarded up an immense fortune, which he was lavishly squandering in all sorts of extravagance and dissipation. His palace stretched for an immense distance along one bank of the narrow Goomty river, and was richly, even gorgeously furnished—the eye, in many cases, becoming lost and bewildered among columns, statues, paintings, chandeliers, arms of the field and chase, and gilded and inlaid furniture of every description. There were gardens, rich in all the fruit, shrubbery, and flowers of a tropical clime, beautiful fountains, sending their silvery spray high into heated air; and artificial ponds, of fairy-like appearance, filled with the finny tribe of every colour and variety.

Along the opposite bank of the Goomty stretches the royal park, with perhaps the largest zoological collection in the world—elephants, rhinoceroses, camels, lions, tigers, cheetahs, buffaloes, lynxes, stags, antelopes, Persian cats, Chinese dogs, and, in fact, animals of every genus and species in the known world, to be counted by scores if not by hundreds. Some faint idea of this vast collection may be formed, when I state that of elephants alone this Indian monarch possessed a hundred and fifty.

About three miles from Lucknow there was a courtyard safely fenced by bamboo, and overlooked by a gallery, which had been expressly constructed and arranged for the King and his court to witness the contests of the different wild beasts—a barbarous amusement, in which the Majesty of Oude took great delight—and here at the appointed time I found myself in company with my friend the Resident and the royal suite. The King, who ordinarily wore the plain black suit of an English gentleman, on this occasion appeared in his royal robes, of Oriental style, made of cloth of silver and gold, with a magnificent crown upon his head, and glittering from head to foot with jewels of value. His chair of state, rich in decorations, and covered with its

crimson, umbrella-shaped canopy, had been placed for him; and the moment he took his seat, five beautiful young ladies, splendidly dressed in the Turkish style, arranged themselves around and behind him, and began to fan him.

As soon as we had all taken our seats where we could have a fine view of the area below, two cages were brought and placed opposite to each other, to the right and left of us, in the verandah that ran all around the enclosure beneath us, and in each of these cages was a large, formidable lion. Through the bamboo grating, or paling, and the bars of their cages, these lions could see each other; and that was what was wanted to prepare them for the fight. They started, frowned, growled, showed their teeth, roared and lashed themselves around their narrow limits with great fury; and when this had been permitted long enough to make it certain their rage would lead them to a fierce and deadly contest, the King smiled, rubbed his hands, and said to the Resident, who was seated on his right, "They will not balk us, your Excellency?"

"I think not, your Majesty," answered the British minister.

"Is your Excellency disposed to bet?" asked the King.

"A small sum, if it so please your Majesty."

"On which beast—Tinga or Coodah?"

"Your Majesty shall choose."

"A hundred gold mohurs, then, on Coodah!" said the King, with considerable animation.

"I accept the bet your Majesty, though I am ignorant as yet which is which."

"Coodah is the lion in the left-hand cage." The Resident bowed. "Another hundred gold mohurs on Coodah!" added the king, addressing me.

I had previously been instructed to take whatever bet the king might offer—the probability being that the amount would not be claimed by the royal head of Oude even if won—or, if claimed and paid, that twice the sum would be returned in the shape of a present. So I bowed, smiled, and replied, "If it so please your majesty."

At this the king clapped his hands, as a signal to the keepers to let the beasts into the enclosure; and the next moment, as if by magic, a bamboo gate in front of each cage flew open. Seeing themselves face to face, with nothing between them, each beast now leaped boldly into the arena, with a cat-like motion; and then stopping, with a low, deadly growl, they looked fiercely and warily at each other, shook their huge manes, and shied off, each to the right, with a few quick, curious, and suspicious glances at every other object and person around them, evidently feeling themselves in a novel and dangerous situation. The keepers lost no time in closing the doors of their cages, and dropping the bamboo gates, and the interest of all parties now became so intense that the silence was death-like.

They began their manoeuvres by circling towards each other. Each went to the right, and began to move round in such a manner that they soon changed sides, each being opposite the other's cage, though a few feet nearer each other than when they had started. Then they stopped and stared each other in the face, uttered low, rumbling growls, like distant thunder, showed their formidable teeth, and resumed their circling manoeuvres. This was continued some ten or fifteen minutes, amid a most intense, almost breathless excitement.

Suddenly, when at last only a few feet divided them, there issued, simultaneously from each throat, such an appalling roar, that I bounded clear from my seat, and more than one person uttered an involuntary exclamation of terror. At the same instant I saw each beast lifted from the earth, as if by some explosive power, and hurled towards each other. They struck in mid-air, came down together, and rolled over and over like a huge ball.

"Bravo!" cried the King, clapping his hands with delight, "this is sport indeed!"

"I never witnessed a more exciting contest!" said my friend.

"Nor I!" was my rejoinder, as my breath now came quick with excitement.

For the space of perhaps five minutes the combat was maintained in the manner related, and with such an equality of strength and skill that it was impossible for any one to tell which would be the victor.

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted the King; "this is glorious!"

As if the lions heard him, and were anxious to win further approbation from their royal master, they now rose up on their hind feet, still tugging at each other's

throats with their teeth, and tearing each other with their claws. The shortness and stoutness of their necks, together with their bushy manes and equality in strength and position, rendered it impossible for either to cut the jugular of the other, and it was evident that unless one should be favoured by accident, it would result in a drawn battle.

At length they separated, as if by mutual consent, and each retired a few feet, panting, drooping, bleeding—and each crouched down on his belly, facing his antagonist, and seemed to watch for some favourable chance of taking him at advantage.

The King issued some command in his native tongue; and almost instantly two long, heated rods were thrust through the bamboo paling on either side of the enclosure, and directed against the bodies of the panting beasts. Both sprung up together, but one turned and looked behind him. It was a fatal mistake. With a bound like lightning, the other struck fairly upon his back, overthrew him in an instant, and fastened upon his throat in such a manner that he became perfectly helpless.

"Coodah is beaten!" cried half-a-dozen excited voices, in English and Hindoostanee.

"He is!" exclaimed the King; and he instantly gave orders to force off the victor with the heated rods.

They were quickly applied, but too late. The strong sharp teeth of Tinga had pierced the jugular vein and tore open the throat of his antagonist; and when the keeper forced him to withdraw, which he did with the proud air of a conqueror, Coodah lay gasping and bleeding to death.

The King did not seem well pleased with the result; but he sent me his bet the next day, which amounted to about one hundred and sixty pounds. He then arranged for a fight to come off between Tinga and a rhinoceros; but this I did not stay to see, for my limited time had expired, though I doubt not it would have been deeply interesting as a specimen of the wild, fierce combats of the jungle.

### WHY I MARRIED A REJECTED SUITOR.

The dull November day was drawing to a close. During the last half hour, as I had fitted to and fro between kitchen and pantry, making ready for the evening meal, I had paused repeatedly by the window, and sent my glance across the broad fields that intervened between the house and the public road, expecting momentarily to see the glistening horns of cattle rising the brow of the hill, the forerunner of my father's approach. But no living thing met my view. So, having moulded my biscuit and set them to rise, I ran out into the yard, and leaning on the gate, peered earnestly through the gathering shades of twilight, hoping to catch a glimpse of the expected one. A dense fog was rolling slowly inland. Already the low meadow lands lying to the east were whelmed beneath the advancing tide, while here and there a solitary tree lifted its tall head above the white impalpable billows, looking like the huge mast of some giant man-of-war becalmed on that silent spectral ocean. A light breeze just lifted the slender needles of the two great pines that stood like grim sentinels on either side of the gate, and made mournful music amid their branches, sounding like the low wash of waves on some far-off shore. Our house, a large, old-fashioned, gable-roofed farmhouse, surrounded by half a score of outbuildings, was situated in the most central part of my father's farm, a full quarter of a mile from the highway, and more than half a mile from any neighbours. It was a lonesome situation, but accustomed to it from childhood I seldom felt its isolation. My father was a drover, and he had left home early that morning for the purpose of purchasing cattle in a neighbouring town, intending to return before nightfall. This arrangement was the more necessary, as my two brothers were away from home and in my father's absence, I was left alone with my invalid mother, and obliged to have the care of things in-door and out. As I stood there leaning over the gate, and carelessly humming an air not to be found in any modern opera, the figure of a man emerged from the fog and came slowly up the long lane that served as a thoroughfare to all in the neighbourhood who, in going to and from the village, preferred a short cut across the fields to the longer route by the public road. As the man drew nearer I recognised our neighbour Dutton.



"Good evenin', Miss Em'ly," he said, halting as he came within speaking distance. "Watchin' for your father, I take it."

I answered in the affirmative.

"Wall, I'm sarcumspectly of the 'pinion that the squire wont reach home to-night. It's the talk at the village that the bridge over the little 'Jopscot has bin kerried off by the freahet, and if so be that it's a fact your father will have to go round by Sunkhaze, a matter of some six or seven miles furdur, an' he'll skersely tempt gittin' thro' with his critters to-night. It's skeary work drivin' cattle after nightfall, 'specially in sich travellin' as 'tis now."

"Nevertheless I am confident that he will come. He is not one to be daunted by trifles, you know, and he will be very unwilling to remain away from home all night."

"Well, I 'lieved he'd natterly be anxious to git home, seein' he's got sicknesses in the famerly. How is your marm?"

"She is more comfortable, thank you. Any news at the village, Mr. Dutton?"

"Not's I knows on. Stay—I did hear tell that Nat Thorndyck got back to his old ha'ts once more."

"Nat Thorndyck! what, has he broken out of prison?"

"Not jest. He's sarved his time out. Warn't sentenced for only five year, you know. I said at the time the judge had orter made it ten year if-a day, 'twas sich an aggrivated case of wholesale 'salt an' bat'ry. I'm sorry he's loose agin. He's a dang'rous feller, an' I suspicion we shall hear of somebody's bein' robbed, or havin' their throats cut, ef he's 'lowed to prow round the country."

"Not so bad as that, I trust," I said, smiling; "he may have reformed."

"Wall, I never did hear tell of a wolf's reforming, or a panther's gittin' meek-like an' losin' his taste for blood, not as I knows on," said the old man drily. "But howsomever I must be jogging, or my old woman 'll think sumthin's happened me. Good-night, Miss Em'ly." And he plodded along homeward.

I half turned to re-enter the house, but paused and lingered by the gate, though I would scarcely confess to myself my motive in doing so. I had ceased to expect my father's return until a late hour. If he had been obliged to go so much out of his way, I knew that he could not arrive before ten or eleven at night. But I will own the truth. I knew that Wilford Stacy would take the path across the fields on his return from his day's work in the village, and I had no objection to seeing the handsome young carpenter, albeit, it must be confessed, we had not been on the best of terms of late. Some women are born flirts, and I think I belonged to that class. Having the misfortune to be the acknowledged belle of our little village, my natural propensity to coquetry had been fostered and strengthened by the homage paid to my charms by my rural admirers. After all, it was perhaps as much their fault as mine that I treated them as so many puppets, capable only of affording me amusement. Were there no slaves, the race of tyrants would soon become extinct; and when men will learn to retain their common sense in affairs of the heart, and refuse to be led blindfolded at the will of some fair syren,—when they will set the example of dealing openly and honestly in love as in other affairs,—then, and only then, will women discard coquetry and learn to practise frankness and sincerity in turn.

For my own part, I coquetted unmercifully with my would-be lovers, and was secretly of opinion that I could make a fool of any man who chose to trust himself within the sphere of my attractions. But with Wilford Stacy I found this altogether an impracticable plan. Try as I would, I could not wind him around my finger. I think he loved me sincerely; but he had too much manliness of character to become the slave of any woman. And when, after having encouraged him by sweet smiles and gentle words, until I believed myself secure of his affections, I proceeded to test my power over him by an assumption of coldness and indifference, I found, to my surprise, that instead of evincing uneasiness or regret at my altered manner and suing for a return of favour as others had done, he chose to meet me on my own ground, and with my own weapons, which he wielded so skilfully, that I was obliged to confess myself foiled. This piqued me, and I called to my aid all the resources of a woman's ingenuity to provoke him to some display of jealousy. The result was a downright quarrel, and for weeks we had only recognised each other when we chanced to meet in the coldest and most formal manner. Now a secret intuition warned me of his approach. I did not

move nor turn my head as I heard his well-known footsteps in the path, but kept on singing in a low tone the words of a song that I knew to be a favourite of his. I had thrown a light scarf over my head, not so much to shield me from the mist, as because I knew that the bright scarlet merino was becoming to my rich, brunette complexion, and set off to advantage the glossy blackness of my hair. Presently the steps grew slower; the music, into which I threw my whole soul, was luring him to my side, as I hoped it would. I ceased singing, and he stepped directly in front of me.

"Good evening, Emily," he said, in a gentler tone than I had heard from his lips for a long while.

"Ah! is it you, Mr. Stacy?" I said, with a start of well affected surprise. "You come upon one so suddenly. I have been watching for my father, you did not pass him, did you?"

"No; I supposed that he had returned."

"He has not, and I fear he will be late, for Mr. Dutton informs me that the bridge over the Pejepscot has been carried away."

"And you are alone with your mother? It seems hardly safe, and you will be lonely sitting up for him."

Does he wish an invitation to remain, thought I, but I answered carelessly:

"Oh, I am not one of the timid sort, you know, and I don't mind being alone."

"Perhaps you expect company," he said eyeing me keenly as he spoke. "Doubtless Frank Jeffreys would be only too happy to enliven your solitude by his presence, did he know you to be alone."

"I think it very likely that he will come," I answered, coolly, "and it must be confessed one could scarcely desire a more interesting and agreeable companion than Frank."

"Oh, I am willing to concede all his good qualities," said Stacy, a little scornfully. "And I suppose not the least of them, in your estimation, is his spaniel-like submission to all your caprices."

"Very complimentary," I replied, laughing, and flinging him a glance, half arch, half defiant, from under my long lashes. "But if Frank resembles a spaniel, as you say, you must allow that you are sometimes very, very like a bear, Wilford."

The look, the tone disarmed him, as I meant it should. I saw the momentary struggle with his pride. Then he drew closer, and laid both his hands on mine, which rested on the topmost bar of the gate. His brown cheek glowed, and there was a new and tender light in his bold, blue eyes. "Milly," he said, giving me the pet name by which I was always called in my own family, "I verily believe that you are a witch, for you draw me to you whether I will or not; but you cannot keep me without my own consent. And now, Milly, you must decide, once and for all, what shall be our future relations to each other. I offer you a true and honest heart; it is yours if you will accept it and value it aright, but I will not have it made a plaything of. You shall not smile on me one hour and flout me the next, as you do with the rest of your suitors. I must be all to you or nothing. I demand love for love, and constancy on your part in return for devotion on mine. I am too proud to let any woman, however dear to me, set her foot on my neck. I am better fitted for master than slave. Can you love me as I am? I await your answer. It will not break my heart if you reject me."

Why need he have said that? Why not have trusted to my better nature, which was already pleading in his behalf? But there was something so imperious even in his gentleness, so much defiance mingled with his love, that it angered me. My spirit rose up in arms at such presumptuous wooing, and I answered haughtily:

"I suppose I ought to feel highly honoured by your preference, however expressed, and be properly grateful that you are willing to take me on any terms; but I don't seem to appreciate your condescension as it deserves. I object to dictation with regard to my conduct towards you or any other person, and as for the love you proffer, it is surrounded with so many restrictions as to render it utterly valueless in my eyes. I decline your offer decidedly, and am happy to know that in so doing I shall not occasion you any unpleasant feelings."

The light and glow all faded out of his face while I was speaking, and were succeeded by a hard and stern expression.

"Emily," he said, "I believe you are utterly heartless, and despise myself for being so weak as to love you. But the spell is broken now. Henceforth you

have no power to wound me. Some day you may regret the love you have so lightly cast aside."

He held my wrist in his strong grasp while he spoke, unconscious in his excitement that the pressure was almost crushing, till an involuntary gesture of pain on my part made him relinquish his hold.

"I shall certainly feel the loss of so gentle a wooer," I said, sarcastically, pointing to the broad, red mark that encircled my arm like a ribbon. He gazed at it a moment in silence. There was no anger in his face now, only sadness and something of reproach in the look with which he regarded me, as he said, gravely,

"Pardon my unconscious violence, Emily. I am very sorry for it. You can afford to forgive me, as it is the last time I shall trouble you. Farewell. I will try to think of you as kindly as I may."

He turned and walked swiftly away. A very pretty lover's quarrel—was it not? But somehow I had no heart to exult over my triumph—if triumph it could be called, and it was with a slow step and grave face I re-entered the house.

I found my mother uneasy at my father's non-arrival, and when I repeated neighbour Dutton's report about the bridge, her uneasiness changed to alarm. Naturally of a firm, hopeful and courageous disposition, long illness had weakened her mentally as well as physically. She had grown nervous, timid, and desponding, and it required all our loving care to keep her from sinking into a state of brooding melancholy.

"It is so unsafe," she kept repeating, "for us to be left alone with such a sum of money in the house."

"But father will certainly return," I said, "even if he has to leave his cattle behind. You know he said, very decidedly, this morning, that he should be back to-night, and he always keeps his word."

My confident tone reassured her a little, and while busying myself with her tea and toast I continued to talk in so lively a strain that she was soon won into a more cheerful mood.

The hours wore on, the night had set in dark and rainy, but as yet no sign of the absent one. My mother's room adjoined the kitchen, and having assisted her to bed, and made the customary arrangements for her comfort through the night, I laid the supper table and completed the preparations for my father's return. Then I sat down by the hearth, and gazing into the glowing depths of the open fire, fell into a reverie.

My thoughts naturally reverted to my recent interview with Wilford Stacy, and the pang I felt as I recalled his parting words was sufficient proof of what I had long suspected, that in my heart of hearts I loved him well and truly. But he was lost to me for ever, for I knew him too well to hope that I could ever win him back, even if my pride would allow of my making advances for that purpose. Well, it was through my own fault that I had lost him, and if I suffered for my folly, at least, no one should suspect it. I was not one to "wear my heart on my sleeve for daws to peck at." The subject was not a pleasant one to contemplate, so I tried to think of something else.

Suddenly the item of news that I had learned from Mr. Dutton with regard to the return of the convict, Nat Thorndyck, to his native village, flashed into my mind and I felt a sudden chill as I thought of it. What if he should take it into his head to visit the house in my father's absence? I fairly trembled at the idea.

I was very young, scarcely more than thirteen, when he received his sentence, five years before, but I could well remember the bold, bad man who had been the terror of the neighborhood, till his career of crime was checked by his incarceration in the State prison. I thought of the money to which my mother had alluded, and wished that my father had taken it with him, instead of leaving it at home for safe keeping.

It was the proceeds of his last sale of cattle, and he had that morning taken from it the amount he thought he should need through the day, and returned the remainder, five hundred dollars in bank notes, to his pocket-book, had placed the book in a drawer of the bureau in my mother's room, charging me playfully not to spend it all for ribbons and nicknacks if a pedlar chanced along through the day.

I was constitutionally fearless, and had never before felt the slightest uneasiness when my father was away, and now I was almost angry with myself as I felt these first symptoms of timidity.

"Pshaw!" I exclaimed, impatiently, "I must be growing nervous. If there is any gratitude in human nature, we, at least, are safe from harm at the hands of Nat Thorndyck, for my father was very kind to him at a time when he needed kindness sorely. And if the



worst comes to the worst, Bruno," I added, stooping to pat the head of the great, shaggy dog who lay stretched out on the rug at my feet, "I think, old fellow, that you and I together could offer a pretty effectual resistance to any attack that might be made upon us."

Bruno half raised himself, and gave me a look that said, as plainly as dog language could express it:

"All right, mistress mine, I am here, and you know well that no harm can reach you while I have life to defend you."

Bruno had been a powerful fellow in his time, a very Goliath of the canine race, able at one spring to bring down a refractory bullock, or to seize and hold a strong man, if occasion required. But he was superannuated now, and unable to accompany my father in his travels, he remained at home, reposing on his laurels, like some veteran pensioner. The only active duties that he felt called upon to perform were a vigilant guarding of the premises from the intrusion of any stray duck or chicken, and a close attendance upon me in all my rambles.

The rain pattered monotonously against the windows, and the wind howled dismally around the corner of the house. I had just risen to replenish the fire when I heard a rapping at the outer door. Supposing it to be a neighbour, stopping on his return from the village, I took up my lamp to answer the summons. Bruno had started up, with a low growl, and was about to accompany me, but I ordered him to remain, and he unwillingly obeyed. As I opened the door a gust of wind almost extinguished my light. I stepped back, shading it with my hand, and then perceived that a stranger stood on the threshold. It was a venerable looking old man, apparently quite infirm, for he leaned heavily on his cane, while in a feeble voice he craved a night's lodging. I paused irresolute. Our house was literally the home of hospitality—the wayfarer was never turned from its doors. But now I felt an almost unconquerable reluctance to admit a stranger in my father's absence. The old man saw my hesitation, and said, plaintively:

"I am weary, and hungry, and footsore; it is very dark, and if I am forced to go further I shall probably miss the way, and have to lie all night on the cold ground, exposed to this chilling rain. Surely Squire Western will not refuse me a night's shelter under his roof."

"You know my father then?" I said, a little surprised.

"I used to know him, and your brother Edward, too."

Ah! that name was a talisman to open both doors and hearts in that house. Edward was in his grave, and his memory was a sacred thing in the family circle. With the wife of Maringer I could have exclaimed:

"And, for he names the lost one's name,

So that he list to stay,

These towers shall his refuge be,

A twelvemonth and a day."

I was ashamed of my momentary hesitation; still, with commendable prudence, I said:

"Please wait one moment while I speak with my mother."

Going to her room, and finding her awake, I briefly laid the case before her:—

"He seems very old and feeble, and is sadly poverty-stricken in appearance," I added.

"Admit him," said my mother. "It can surely do no harm. No blessing enters the door that is closed against the needy wayfarer, and we have the Apostle's injunction, 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.'"

"Well, mamma," I said, smiling, "if an angel should go tramping round the country in disguise, I hardly think he would be likely to smell so strong of tobacco smoke as this man does. But I will admit him at once. I only hesitated on account of father's absence."

Returning to the door, I invited the stranger to enter. But scarcely had he crossed the threshold when Bruno sprang forward, barking violently, and would have precipitated himself upon the old man but for my prompt interference.

"Down, Bruno! Down! I say. What do you mean by such conduct? Back to your rug, this instant!"

He dared not disobey my peremptory command, but retreated slowly, growling a remonstrance at every step. I apologised to my guest, who had retreated in alarm at the dog's attack, for the inhospitable reception he had encountered, and drawing an arm-chair to the fire begged him to be seated. As he came forward I noticed that he stooped a good deal and appeared to walk with some difficulty. He sank into the seat, and stretched

out his hands, tremulous with age and weakness, towards the cheerful blaze. His thin, white hair flowed down over his neck, and his silvery beard descending to his breast gave him a truly patriarchal appearance, but beneath his shaggy eyebrows gleamed a pair of keen gray eyes that age had not yet robbed of their fire. His garments were old and threadbare, and seemed scarcely sufficient to protect him from the inclemency of the weather. I felt sincere compassion for this poor old wayfarer, who seemed so lonely and feeble, and after he was warmed I invited him to sit up to the table and partake of food. While pouring his tea I inquired how far he had travelled.

"Ten miles since morning," he said, naming the place from which he came and telling to what part of the country he was going. But he did not seem inclined to talk much, which I imputed to his weariness. He asked, however, several questions about my father, where he was, when I expected him back, and so forth.

Meanwhile Bruno, who had taken up his station on the hearthrug again, lay with his head drooped on his forepaws and his watchful eyes following every motion of the stranger, occasionally showing his white teeth in a subdued snarl. He was never cordial with strangers, but I had seldom seen him manifest so much animosity as he displayed towards the forlorn old man.

"Bruno," old fellow, aren't you ashamed of yourself?" I said, stooping to caress him. "You will bring discredit on the house by your churlish conduct. I thought you had a more charitable disposition."

He answered my remonstrance by rubbing his head fondly against my arm, but continued his watch of the stranger.

After the old man had satisfied his hunger, he asked permission to lie down on the lounge and rest himself. I offered to show him at once to his room, but to this he objected. He wanted to see my father, on his return, and talk with him about old times, he said. So he lay down on the chintz-covered sofa, and I returned to my seat and my netting.

The time wore on; the storm increased in violence, but I listened vainly in the pauses of the wind to hear my father's cheery voice ring out.

"Hilloa, the house!" as was his custom on his return at night.

Twice in the course of the evening I went into my mother's room, and found her sleeping sweetly. The last time, impelled by an impulse that I could neither account for nor resist, I unlocked the drawer that contained the money, and taking out the pocketbook put it in the bosom of my dress. My stranger guest seemed sleeping soundly, and even Bruno had sunk into a doze, but as for myself I was possessed by an unaccountable restlessness. A vague premonition of evil haunted me, and I started nervously at every unusual sound. Between nine and ten o'clock I went once more to the outer door, and opening it, looked out into the night. It was pitchy dark, a darkness that might almost be felt, and the storm raged furiously. I glanced in the direction of the village, but not a single, friendly ray could I discern to relieve my sense of loneliness; I seemed shut out from all the world, and a feeling of inexpressible sadness came over me. Bruno, who had followed me to the door, seemed to partake of my feelings, for after gazing wistfully into the gloom without, and then into my troubled face, he gave utterance to a long howl that fairly made me shiver.

"Be quiet, sir," I said. "I think we are both losing our common sense. Your master would call us cowards, and not come wide of the mark either."

Closing and bolting the door, I returned to the kitchen, and rousing my guest told him he had better retire, as it was getting late, and no signs of my father's arrival. But he begged to be permitted to remain where he was for the night; alleging that his clothes were so soiled he was not fit to occupy a clean bed, and had much rather keep his place before the fire. I objected to this at first, but he insisted so pertinaciously that I gave up the point, and bringing some blankets from the next room threw them over him, that he might not be cold. Then I heaped more wood on the fire, retrimmed my lamp and resolved to watch till midnight. If father did not make his appearance by that time I would then lie down beside my mother. Throwing a shawl over my shoulders, I sat down near the door of my mother's room, which was ajar, and leaning my head against the cushioned back of the chair, fell into a brown study. Gradually my thoughts grew confused, and before I was sensible of being drowsy I had lapsed into the land of dreams. I could not have slept long when I awoke with a start, and a vague sense of

impending danger, which has not lessened on opening my eyes. Before me stood my stranger guest; no longer bent and decrepit, but erect and stalwart. He had laid one hand on my shoulder; not with the palsied grasp of age, it was the iron grip of one in the strength and vigour of manhood, while before me gleamed a long, murderous-looking knife, its keen point touching my throat. Was I indeed awake, or helpless in the power of a hideous nightmare? I strove to speak—to cry out, but my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth.

"Hist! girl," said the wretch; "no noise, no struggling, or it will be worse for you. Attend to what I say. I want the money that your father received for his cattle, at the last sale, and left behind him this morning; also the gold watch which your brother Tom left in your hands when he went away. Get them for me quick, for I have no time to spend hunting them up, and mark me, no screams or hysterics; I have a very decided way of dealing with such things."

I had no intention of indulging in either. By an almost superhuman effort of the will I had succeeded in conquering my terror, and summoning all my self-control, I now felt as cool and calm as ever I did in my life.

"You must be a cowardly fellow," I said, scornfully. "You assume the disguise of a beggar in order to obtain admittance into a house that contains only two defenceless women, and after being warmed and fed you would repay their hospitality by robbing them. Why, any decent villain would be ashamed of such conduct!"

He regarded me for a moment in silence, apparently too much surprised to speak.

"You are a brave girl," he said, at length, "and I admire your spirit. But I cannot stop to parley. I have delayed my purpose until the latest moment, to make sure that no straggler from the village should take the alarm in passing. I must put miles between me and this place before morning. If you will get me the money peaceably, well and good, I will leave without harming you. But if you refuse, and I have to spend precious time in searching for it myself, I will first murder the old woman before your eyes, and then cut your own throat. Now, choose which you will do?"

There was no help for it.

"Take your hand from my arm," I said, "and I will get you the money."

"Not so fast, girl; I shall not lose my hold on you till the money is placed in my hands. I want no devil's trick played on me, and you look as though you were equal to anything of the kind."

"But," I remonstrated, "to get the watch I must go into my mother's room, and I will not have you enter there. She is so feeble that the fright would kill her."

"Oh! we shan't wake her. I'll step like a cat treading on velvet; but where you go, I go too."

Remonstrances were useless. I shrank with loathing from the ruffian's touch, and my blood boiled with indignation at his determination to enter my mother's room.

That even the shadow of wrong or violence should be allowed to approach that dear one, who was the object of constant solicitude in her family, seemed something monstrous and unnatural to me. Setting my teeth hard, to keep down the unavailing expression of my feelings, I rose to lead the way. But the sound of our voices had awakened Bruno. The faithful animal seemed to comprehend at a glance the position of affairs. He saw the hand of the hated stranger laid on the person of his mistress, and, unmindful of his own age and feebleness, with a fierce, vindictive growl, he sprang full at the throat of his enemy. There was a moment's desperate struggle. Scarcely knowing what I did, I sprang to the hearth, and seizing the fire-shovel, turned, with the intention, I believe, of dealing the robber a blow with it. But at that instant he shook himself free of the dog, who dropped at my feet and rolled over and over in the death agony. The ruffian's knife had done its work. Another moment, and he had pinioned my arms in his strong grasp, and wrenched the iron from my hand.

"So, girl, you thought to show fight, did you? Had you hit me with that you would never have struck another blow."

I stared at him in astonishment. It was no longer an old man, even in appearance, that stood before me. In his struggle with the dog the patriarchal, false beard had been dragged away, revealing a smoothly shaven chin and a massive lower jaw, strikingly resembling that of a bulldog in formation. His wig, too, had fallen back, displaying a crop of coarse, red hair beneath.



Five years had effected so little change in that evil-looking face that I recognised it at once.

"So, Nat Thorndyck, it is you then who have come back to rob your benefactor? Had there been one spark of honour or gratitude in your composition, you would have died rather than have lifted your hand against one of this household."

"You know me, then?" he said, grimly.

"Know you! your face is not one easily forgotten."

"Well, the knowledge is like to cost you dear. I would have spared you if I could, for I have not forgotten that your father befriended me once. But that goes for nothing now. You have recognised me, and my own safety requires that I take your life."

"You will not murder me, surely," I said, seeing too late the folly of which I had been guilty.

"I certainly shall do that very thing, and your mother shall keep you company," he said, speaking as coolly as though it were a matter of business. "Your evidence would send me to prison once more, and I've had enough of that place to last me a lifetime. I'd sooner commit a dozen murders than risk being sent back."

"But if I promise not to betray you."

"Bah!" he interrupted, contemptuously; "catch me trusting to such a promise. No, dead men tell no tales, and this knife is keen enough even to stop a woman's tongue from blabbing."

A deep groan in the bedroom made us both turn in that direction. My mother had been aroused by the noise of the struggle, and had heard all that followed. She had risen in bed, and her white terror-stricken face looked out from the darkness, ghastly as that of a corpse. How could I comfort her?

"Pray to God, mother," I cried. "Pray to Him! He can help us, even in this strait."

"He'd best be quick about it then," sneered the blasphemous wretch, "for I assure you he's got no time to lose. But get me this money at once, girl, and then I'll settle affairs with you."

"You must be a born simpleton," I answered, contemptuously, "to think that I will give you the money, when I know you will take my life as soon as it is in your hands. Find it yourself, if you can, and I wish you joy of the search, for I promise you it will be a long one."

This staggered him; and after a moment's pause, he said, with an appearance of yielding:

"Well, give me the money and the watch, so that I can be off, and I promise not to harm you."

I looked in his face, and was convinced that he would not keep his word. Falsehood was written in every line of it. There was a murderous fire in his eyes, and I knew that the fiend in his heart was thirsting for blood. But my plan was formed on the instant. I affected to believe him, and, taking up the lamp, said:

"Come, then."

Still with his grasp on my arm I led him to the opposite side of the room, where a small, movable cupboard stood against the wall. Pushing this a little aside, I slid back a panel of the wall, disclosing a small cupboard filled with newspapers. From the midst of these I drew forth a pocket-book, and gave it into his hands. Of course it was not the one containing the money, that was safe on my person. This one was filled with old receipts, loose notes, and memorandums.

"Well," he remarked, "I should never have thought of looking there for it, that's so. Now, stand still, and mind that you don't move from your tracks while I open it."

To do this he was obliged to relinquish his hold of me. Taking the handle of his knife betwixt his teeth he proceeded to undo the straps of the pocket-book. This was the opportunity on which I had counted. Drawing slowly back by an adroit movement, I suddenly raised my right arm, and, with all the force that I could command, hurled the lamp full in his face. He staggered backward with the blow, and before he could recover himself, I sprang past him with the quickness of thought, gained my mother's room almost at a bound, closed the door, and shot the bolt into its socket.

There were matches and a candle on the table by her bed. I hastily struck a light, then, without pausing, I ran to a large chest that stood in a corner of the room. It was so heavy that on ordinary occasions I could not have moved it. Now I swung it around as easily as though it had been my work-bag, and planted it against the door to serve as a barricade. Then I turned to my mother, who, pale and trembling, had watched my movements in silence.

"Mother, dear mother, if you love me—if you would

save your own life—summon up all your courage. We must escape by the window."

She could not speak, but assented by a motion of the head and tried to assist me as I hurriedly proceeded to invest her with some portion of her clothing.

The robber had been silent for a few moments; probably he had been partially stunned by the force of the blow. Now we heard him venting his rage in a torrent of oaths and blasphemies that fairly chilled my blood. These were accompanied by thundering blows on the door. Had it been of pine it must have yielded, but the heavy maple-wood panels and stout hinges stood firm. But I knew it could not hold out long against that fierce assault. I had succeeded in getting my mother partially dressed, speaking words of hope and courage, to which my heart did not respond. She had not risen from her bed without assistance for months, now she got up and walked with a firm step to the window. I threw it wide open. A furious gust of wind and rain drove inward, drenching, blinding and half-suffocating us. My mother would have fallen had I not supported her.

"It is useless," she said, faintly; "my strength is all gone—I can get no further. Leave me, Milly—save yourself."

"I will be cut into inch pieces before I will leave you, mother," I said, firmly. "Courage, dearest; a little effort will carry us through the window, and then we can secrete ourselves in one of the outhouses."

I placed a chair by the window and almost lifted her into it, designing to help her out first, but she shrank back, saying, in a tone of terror:

"The waterbutt, Milly! We shall be drowned."

Oh, heavens! I had forgotten it. The rain waterbutt was directly beneath the window and occupied the whole space across. It must be nearly full now, and, in the darkness, how could he escape drowning? I uttered a groan of agony, and stood for a moment motionless. A thousand thoughts flashed through my brain, foremost was that of Wilford Stacy. What would I not have given for the aid of his strong arm, clear brain and fearless heart in that hour of peril! and, but for my own folly, I might have had it. I was bitterly punished for my sins. "Save, Lord, or we perish?" was the agonizing cry that went up from my heart. Still that heavy shower of blows raining against the door, which bent and quivered, and threatened every moment to give way; still those horrid oaths, mingled with savage threats of an outrage to which death itself were a mercy. My momentary stupor was over.

"We must risk all," I said. "Better a thousand times to die by drowning than to fall alive into the hands of that wretch."

Seizing a blanket from the bed, I tied one end around my mother's waist, and holding the other in my hand, directed her how to proceed so as to grasp the edge of the waterbutt, and, if possible, swing herself over the side. But while I was yet speaking she uttered a deep groan and fell back into my arms rigid and convulsed. I lowered her gently to the floor, and, leaning from the window, rent the air with my piercing cries for help. I shouted until exhausted, and then sat down by my mother's side, and praying God to strike me dead ere that man could reach me.

Crash! crash! The door was giving way. I rose to my feet and mechanically looked around for some means of defence. There was nothing that would serve as a weapon. The shattered door fell in. The chest served for a moment to impede the robber's entrance, but only for a moment. As he leaped over it I seized a stool, and in sheer desperation hurled it at his head. He darted on one side in time to avoid the blow, and the next moment I was struggling in his arms. With a burst of fierce exultation he drew me through the door into the kitchen. My only hope now was in instant death, that might save me from a worse fate. His hand was within my reach, and, seizing it with my teeth, I bit it until the blood came. The pain seemed to madden him. With a fearful imprecation he clutched my throat, and grasping his knife, which he had thrown on the table, he raised his arm to strike. I saw the uplifted blade gleam in the firelight, and, closing my eyes with a shudder, committed my soul to God. But before the blow could descend I heard the sharp click of a pistol behind me, a bullet whizzed past, and the uplifted arm of the ruffian fell powerless at his side. The next moment his grip on my throat relaxed, and he fell senseless at my feet, prostrated by a blow that might almost have felled an ox.

While faint, dizzy, bewildered, scarce conscious of my deliverance, I reeled forward and fell into the out-

stretched arms of Wilford Stacy. I did not faint—I never fainted in my life—but I lay in his arms helpless as an infant, with no power to move or speak. My white face and closed eyes frightened him. He thought me dying, and called my name, coupled with words of passionate tenderness that thrilled me even at that moment. A burst of tears came to my relief, and throwing my arms around his neck, I sobbed out,

"Oh, Will, you have saved my life, and if you will only forgive me, I will never, never flirt again, but love you as long as I live."

Reader, his answer is not for your ears. The next moment I broke away from him, exclaiming,

"My mother! Oh, Wilford, she is dead or dying. Help me to attend to her."

"Let me first secure this wretch," he said, stooping over the prostrate robber. "He seems quiet enough now, but may revive and do further mischief."

He bound Thorndyck's hands securely, and then came to my assistance. My mother was no longer convulsed, but she lay without sense or motion. Wilford lifted her in his arms and laid her on the bed.

"She lives!" he said, cheerfully, as he laid his finger on her wrist, "and we will soon restore her to consciousness."

He applied proper restoratives, and before long had the pleasure of seeing her open her eyes and look around her. Familiar faces were bending over her, and at first she seemed to retain no consciousness of what had reduced her to such a state. But as memory returned she started up in bed, trembling in every limb. We soothed her with assurances of safety, and while we were still trying to allay her fears there came a loud rapping at the outer door, and my father's voice demanded admittance. Wilford hastened to open the door.

"What, Stacy! You here? Did my little girl get lonesome in my absence, and invite you to keep her company?" said my father in his pleasant, cheery tones.

But as he crossed the threshold he paused and gazed appalled at the ghastly spectacle that met his eyes. There lay his faithful dog in a pool of blood, and near him the apparently lifeless form of the robber. The door was strewn with fragments of the broken lamp, and mingled with them lay Wilford's pistol and Thorndyck's bloody knife. Farther on was the battered and broken door that led into his wife's room.

"My wife! my child!" he gasped, in a tone of agony, as he sprang forward.

"Both safe, thank God!" said Wilford.

The next moment my father, with one arm clasped tightly around my waist, was bending over to kiss my mother and assure himself that she was indeed uninjured.

Then came explanations on all sides. I had to relate all the events of the evening, interrupted occasionally by the vehement exclamations of my auditors. Then Wilford took up the tale, and we learned the cause of his providential arrival at the moment of my greatest extremity. After returning home that evening, he went up to his room and sat trying to read, but really thinking over his interview with me, and, as he afterwards acknowledged, blaming himself for the precipitancy with which he had acted. Nor could he quite divest himself of a feeling of anxiety as he thought of the possibility of my remaining alone in the house all night, in case my father should fail to return. About ten o'clock a younger brother came up to bed, and casually mentioned the fact of Nat Thorndyck's return to his home, and added a report that he had been seen lurking in the vicinity of Squire Western's house the day before. Wilford was on his feet in an instant, and without stopping to reply to his brother's exclamation of astonishment, he seized his revolver and sallied forth into the rain and darkness, determined to assure himself of my safety by keeping guard at our door until my father's return. He was still at some distance from the house when the sound of my cries reached him; they added wings to his feet. When he reached the house he found the door bolted, but there was a window in the porch that was unfastened, and by this he gained admittance. He entered the kitchen just as the door of my mother's room gave way beneath the blows showered upon it by Thorndyck, who, deafened by his own noise, heard not the sound of approaching footsteps. Wilford took in the whole scene at a glance, and when he saw me in the robber's grasp he raised his pistol to fire. Twice he took deliberate aim and twice paused, fearing that the bullet intended for the assassin might reach my heart.



But when he saw Thorndyck's arm uplifted for the fatal blow he hesitated no longer. Dropping his pistol as soon as he had discharged it, he seized a stick of wood and inflicted the blow that laid the ruffian at my feet.

"And for the sake of that paltry sum the wretch would have committed murder! I would the money had been given to the flames ere it had subjected my loved ones to such danger," said my father, as he drew me close to him.

"Nevertheless it is safe, father," I said, drawing forth the pocket-book and placing it in his hands.

"It is yours, my child, every cent of it. You have dearly earned it, and it shall serve for your wedding-dowry, provided you marry your preserver."

Willford smiled, and I turned away my head.

"And now," said my father, "we must attend to this wretch, who has done his best to render my home desolate in return for the benefits I once heaped upon him. I think I could have forgiven any other man more readily."

"The more merit, then, in forgiving him, father. We must not let his guilt make us forget our Christianity."

Upon examination, it was found that the robber's right arm was shattered, and there was a serious but not fatal wound on his head. When restored to consciousness by the application of proper remedies, he glowered savagely upon us all, but refused to speak, and bore his sufferings in sullen silence.

He was removed to another room, and my father, who had considerable skill in surgery, dressed his wounds. In the morning a surgeon was summoned to attend him. What more remains to be written of this bad man I will relate in a few words. He remained with us until his wounds were so far healed as to render it safe to remove him to the county jail, there to await his trial at the next term of the Supreme Court. While beneath our roof, although the object of the most unremitting kindness from every member of the family, he never manifested the slightest symptom of repentance, but retained his dogged sullenness of demeanour to the last, seeming only to regret that he had failed in accomplishing his nefarious purpose. Of course his trial resulted in his being sent to his old quarters in the state prison, and this time his sentence was for life.

Poor Bruno! Dear, gallant fellow, faithful unto death! Some may curl the lip at the idea of shedding tears at the loss of a dog, but I am not ashamed to confess that I wept bitterly over the body of the noble brute who had given his life in defence of mine.

I have read of those whose hair, through grief or mortal terror, has grown white in a single night; my curls retained their sheeny darkness undimmed, but my face, in its almost deathly pallor, bore evident traces of what I had undergone, and it was weeks before it regained its usual rosy bloom. Strange to say, my mother was not permanently injured by the events of that fearful night. The excitement through which she had passed seemed to act as a tonic to her debilitated system, she began to grow better at once, and in a few months was completely restored to health.

And did I marry my preserver? Of course I did. And if you wish for any further particulars of this veracious history, you can have them by addressing Mrs. Willford Stacy, P—, State of M—. And did I keep my promise about flirting? Most faithfully. If you doubt it, ask my husband.

#### OUR MAY.

We rename her June, for our Mays are chill,  
And the roses, May roses we say,  
Are only May buds that won't blossom until  
Kissed out by June's sweeter day.

No matter for names, for the flucht June skies  
Have no softer or sunnier hue  
Than the tender light prisoned in May's blue eyes,  
Making summer our whole year through.

And no matter for roses, the touch of her hand  
Falls soft as their pink petals may.  
And her fragrant breath sweet is, as summer's breath bland,  
With red clover blossoms and hay.

The notes of glad birds carol out in her glee,  
And the sharp chirp of dear little things  
That live you can't guess if in air or in tree,  
A voice with impalpable wings.

Oh! baby, all ways that are your ways charm,  
All wilfulness pretty you do,  
In the hollow of God's hand kept from harm,  
He loves our wee darling too.

### Pastime.

#### ENIGMAS.

##### I.

We are little airy creatures,  
All of different voice and features;  
One of us in glass is set,  
Another you will find in jet,  
A third you're sure to meet in tin,  
And the fourth a box within;  
If the last you should pursue,  
It can never fly from you.

##### II.

What is that word of one syllable, which, if the two first letters are taken from it, becomes a word of two syllables?

##### III.

What word is that of five syllables, from which if you take away one, no syllable remains?

##### IV.

I am high, I am low, I am thick, I am thin;  
I can keep people out or can keep people in;  
I am strong, I am weak, and the cannon's hard ball  
Has oft proved unable to cause my downfall;  
Yet once a fat pig, to escape from its drover,  
Knocked a hole in my side, and then I fell over;  
I am dead to all feeling, and deaf to all sound;  
But at music's sweet voice I once fell to the ground.

##### V.

I am so gigantic that no one can measure me, and I am so small that I can be held in the hand. I am used and highly prized by savages and children. When holding a lofty position I am looked up to and admired; but when lowly, I am submissive. I am of various colours, and promote harmony; and no ship or musical assembly can be considered perfect without me.

#### CHARADES.

##### I.

There came a gay and gallant crew,  
Rejoicing on the shore,  
Who drank as tars were wont to do,  
In happy days of yore.

My first, containing sparkling ale,  
Passed freely round that day,  
And many a joke and merry tale  
Bespoke them blithe and gay.

Then some to charm the listening fair,  
Their vocal powers employed;  
While some assumed a sultan's air  
As they my next enjoyed.

Besides, their pleasures to enhance,  
Crowned with a flowing bowl,  
They witnessed there that merry dance,  
A tar's delight, my whole.

##### II.

See yonder, 'tween the earth and air,  
My lofty first its head doth rear,  
Where nought but clouds ethereal fly,  
And feathered songsters warbling high.

Hark! hark! the shrill, far-echoing horn  
Proclaims it is a hunting morn.  
On, on my boys!—on, every one!—  
My joyous second is begun.

This tells my whole—but I'll not say  
A word about it, "Yea or nay"—  
If you can't bring it to your mind,  
Really, my friend, you must be blind.

##### III.

One gossip to another beckoned,  
To inquire if he had seen my second,  
Or was acquainted with my first,  
Which was (he said) about the worst  
That he had sometimes heard!

"I've not," replied the friend in haste,  
"But not a moment will I waste;"  
So off he went my whole to see,  
And learn as fast as e'er could be  
To what his friend referred.

##### IV.

My first makes all nature appear with one face;  
At my second there's elegance, beauty, and grace;  
And if this charade is not easily read,  
You deserve that my whole should be thrown at your head.

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#### REBUSES.

##### I.

Entire, I am hair; my head, tail, and half my interior are plural of my head and interior; transposed, there are but few things without me; once more transposed, and but few petitions lack me.

##### II.

I am a word of three syllables and six letters; entire, I am the name of a country; curtail me, and I become an offence; now behead me, and I am a companion of winter; transpose me, and I am under your feet; restore me to my last form, and then curtail me, and I am a border.

##### III.

I'm placed in every furnished home,  
And oft in gardens I appear;  
You, too, may see me when you roam  
Through noble halls and hamlets near.

Beheaded, I am ever bound  
With young and old, enslaved or free;  
Behead again, and 'twill be found  
That life itself depends on me.

##### IV.

I am a noun, of letters few,  
And yet in me a god you view;  
Divest me of my godlike fame,  
And then I am a useful name;  
Transfer me thus, and you behold  
My form in earth and metal mould;  
Transferred again to field and heath,  
I'm found in arms that scatter death;  
In sportive mood or fierce array,  
I aid the charge that wins the day.  
Transpose me now, and you'll admire  
My beauty in your neat attire;  
Nor does the plant disown my name  
When I adorn its fragile frame;  
The sleeper owns my transient sway,  
And hails me both by night and day.  
Come, gentle reader, tell me true,  
My name and transposition too.

##### V.

Search Holy Writ, and you will see  
A noted warrior fought with me;  
Behead, on mountain-tops I'm seen,  
Or in the briny deep have been;  
Behead again, transpose, beware!  
For I may prove a fatal snare;  
If you again my head should sever,  
No matter how inform'd or clever,  
'Tis all in vain, give up the rout,  
For you can never find me out.

##### VI.

Three-fifths of bright and pure,  
An expression of surprise,  
A man of blundering wit,  
This name you'll all surmise.

An animal curtailed,  
Of colour dark and small,  
And were it in the room but seen,  
'Twould frighten one and all.

The whole a female's name,  
Well known by young and old,  
Possessed of wit and beauty,  
And wealth of untold gold.

#### ANSWERS TO CHARADES, ETC., IN OUR LAST.

REBUSES. I. Fox (ox—x—o). II. E-nig-ma.

CHARADES. I. Prim-Rose. II. Re-form-a-Tory. III. Watch-Man. IV. A-bun-dance. V. Gold-smith. VI. May-pole. VII. Bar-rack. VIII. Butter-fly. IX. Cot-ton.

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But when he saw Thorndyck's arm uplifted for the fatal blow he hesitated no longer. Dropping his pistol as soon as he had discharged it, he seized a stick of wood and inflicted the blow that laid the ruffian at my feet.

"And for the sake of that paltry sum the wretch would have committed murder! I would the money had been given to the flames ere it had subjected my loved ones to such danger," said my father, as he drew me close to him.

"Nevertheless it is safe, father," I said, drawing forth the pocket-book and placing it in his hands.

"It is yours, my child, every cent of it. You have dearly earned it, and it shall serve for your wedding-dowry, provided you marry your preserver."

Wilford smiled, and I turned away my head.

"And now," said my father, "we must attend to this wretch, who has done his best to render my home desolate in return for the benefits I once heaped upon him. I think I could have forgiven any other man more readily."

"The more merit, then, in forgiving him, father. We must not let his guilt make us forget our Christianity."

Upon examination, it was found that the robber's right arm was shattered, and there was a serious but not fatal wound on his head. When restored to consciousness by the application of proper remedies, he glowered savagely upon us all, but refused to speak, and bore his sufferings in sullen silence.

He was removed to another room, and my father, who had considerable skill in surgery, dressed his wounds. In the morning a surgeon was summoned to attend him. What more remains to be written of this bad man I will relate in a few words. He remained with us until his wounds were so far healed as to render it safe to remove him to the county jail, there to await his trial at the next term of the Supreme Court. While beneath our roof, although the object of the most unrelenting kindness from every member of the family, he never manifested the slightest symptom of repentance, but retained his dogged sullenness of demeanour to the last, seeming only to regret that he had failed in accomplishing his nefarious purpose. Of course his trial resulted in his being sent to his old quarters in the state prison, and this time his sentence was for life.

Poor Bruno! Dear, gallant fellow, faithful unto death! Some may curl the lip at the idea of shedding tears at the loss of a dog, but I am not ashamed to confess that I wept bitterly over the body of the noble brute who had given his life in defence of mine.

I have read of those whose hair, through grief or mortal terror, has grown white in a single night; my curls retained their sheeny darkness undimmed, but my face, in its almost deathly pallor, bore evident traces of what I had undergone, and it was weeks before it regained its usual rosy bloom. Strange to say, my mother was not permanently injured by the events of that fearful night. The excitement through which she had passed seemed to act as a tonic to her debilitated system, she began to grow better at once, and in a few months was completely restored to health.

And did I marry my preserver? Of course I did. And if you wish for any further particulars of this voracious history, you can have them by addressing Mrs. Wilford Stacy, P—, State of M—. And did I keep my promise about flirting? Most faithfully. If you doubt it, ask my husband.

#### OUR MAY.

We rename her June, for our Mays are chill,  
And the roses, May roses we say,  
Are only May buds that won't blossom until  
Kissed out by June's sweeter day.

No matter for names, for the flauit June skies  
Have no softer hue  
Than the tender light prisoned in May's blue eyes,  
Making summer our whole year through.

And no matter for roses, the touch of her hand  
Falls soft as their pink petals may.  
And her fragrant breath sweet is, as summer's breath bland,  
With red clover blossoms and hay.

The notes of glad birds carol out in her glee,  
And the sharp chirp of dear little things  
That live you can't guess if in air or in tree,  
A voice with impalpable wings.

Oh! baby, all ways that are your ways charm,  
All wilfulness pretty you do,  
In the hollow of God's hand kept from harm,  
He loves our wee darling too.

### Pastime.

#### ENIGMAS.

I.  
We are little airy creatures,  
All of different voice and features;  
One of us in glass is set,  
Another you will find in jet,  
A third you're sure to meet in tin,  
And the fourth a box within;  
If the last you should pursue,  
It can never fly from you.

II.  
What is that word of one syllable, which, if the two first letters are taken from it, becomes a word of two syllables?

III.  
What word is that of five syllables, from which if you take away one, no syllable remains?

IV.  
I am high, I am low, I am thick, I am thin;  
I can keep people out or can keep people in;  
I am strong, I am weak, and the cannon's hard ball  
Has oft proved unable to cause my downfall;  
Yet once a fat pig, to escape from its drover,  
Knocked a hole in my side, and then I fell over;  
I am dead to all feeling, and deaf to all sound;  
But at music's sweet voice I once fell to the ground.

V.  
I am so gigantic that no one can measure me, and I am so small that I can be held in the hand. I am used and highly prized by savages and children. When holding a lofty position I am looked up to and admired; but when lowly, I am submissive. I am of various colours, and promote harmony; and no ship or musical assembly can be considered perfect without me.

#### CHARADES.

I.  
There came a gay and gallant crew,  
Rejoicing on the shore,  
Who drank as tars were wont to do,  
In happy days of yore.

My first, containing sparkling ale,  
Passed freely round that day,  
And many a joke and merry tale  
Bespoke them blithe and gay.

Then some to charm the listening fair,  
Their vocal powers employed;  
While some assumed a sultan's air  
As they my next enjoyed.

Besides, their pleasures to enhance,  
Crowned with a flowing bowl,  
They witnessed there that merry dance,  
A tar's delight, my whole.

II.  
See yonder, 'tween the earth and air,  
My lofty first its head doth rear,  
Where nought but clouds ethereal fly,  
And feathered songsters warbling high.

Hark! hark! the shrill, far-echoing horn  
Proclaims it is a hunting morn.  
On, on my boys!—on, every one!—  
My joyous second is begun.

This tells my whole—(but I'll not say  
A word about it, "Yea or nay")—  
If you can't bring it to your mind,  
Really, my friend, you must be blind.

III.  
One gossip to another beckoned,  
To inquire if he had seen my second,  
Or was acquainted with my first,  
Which was (he said) about the worst  
That he had sometimes heard!

"I've not," replied the friend in haste,  
"But not a moment will I waste;"  
So off he went my whole to see,  
And learn as fast as e'er could be  
To what his friend referred.

IV.  
My first makes all nature appear with one face;  
At my second there's elegance, beauty, and grace;  
And if this charade is not easily read,  
You deserve that my whole should be thrown at your head.

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#### REBUSES.

I.  
Entire, I am hair; my head, tail, and half my interior are plural of my head and interior; transposed, there are but few things without me; once more transposed, and but few petitions lack me.

II.  
I am a word of three syllables and six letters; entire, I am the name of a country; curtail me, and I become an offence; now behead me, and I am a companion of winter; transpose me, and I am under your feet; restore me to my last form, and then curtail me, and I am a border.

III.  
I'm placed in every furnished home,  
And oft in gardens I appear;  
You, too, may see me when you roam  
Through noble halls and hamlets near.

Beheaded, I am ever bound  
With young and old, enslaved or free;  
Behead again, and 'twill be found  
That life itself depends on me.

IV.  
I am a noun, of letters few,  
And yet in me a god you view;  
Divest me of my godlike fame,  
And then I am a useful name;  
Transfer me thus, and you behold  
My form in earth and metal mould;  
Transferred again to field and heath,  
I'm found in arms that scatter death;  
In sportive mood or fierce array,  
I aid the charge that wins the day.  
Transpose me now, and you'll admire  
My beauty in your neat attire;  
Nor does the plant disown my name  
When I adorn its fragile frame;  
The sleeper owns my transient sway,  
And hails me both by night and day.  
Come, gentle reader, tell me true,  
My name and transposition too.

V.  
Search Holy Writ, and you will see  
A noted warrior fought with me;  
Behead, on mountain-tops I'm seen,  
Or in the briny deep have been;  
Behead again, transpose, beware!  
For I may prove a fatal snare;  
If you again my head should sever,  
No matter how inform'd or clever,  
'Tis all in vain, give up the rout,  
For you can never find me out.

VI.  
Three-fifths of bright and pure,  
An expression of surprise,  
A man of blundering wit,  
This name you'll all surmise.

An animal curtailed,  
Of colour dark and small,  
And were it in the room but seen,  
'Twould frighten one and all.

The whole a female's name,  
Well known by young and old,  
Possessed of wit and beauty,  
And wealth of untold gold.

#### ANSWERS TO CHARADES, ETC., IN OUR LAST.

REBUSES. I. Fox (ox—x—o). II. E-nig-ma.

CHARADES. I. Prim-Rose. II. Re-form-a-Tory. III. Watch-Man. IV. A-bun-dance. V. Gold-smith. VI. May-pole. VII. Bar-rack. VIII. Butter-fly. IX. Cot-ton.

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EVANS' NATURAL REMEDY FOR... (The text is partially obscured and difficult to read, but appears to be a list of ailments or a description of the remedy's benefits.)